





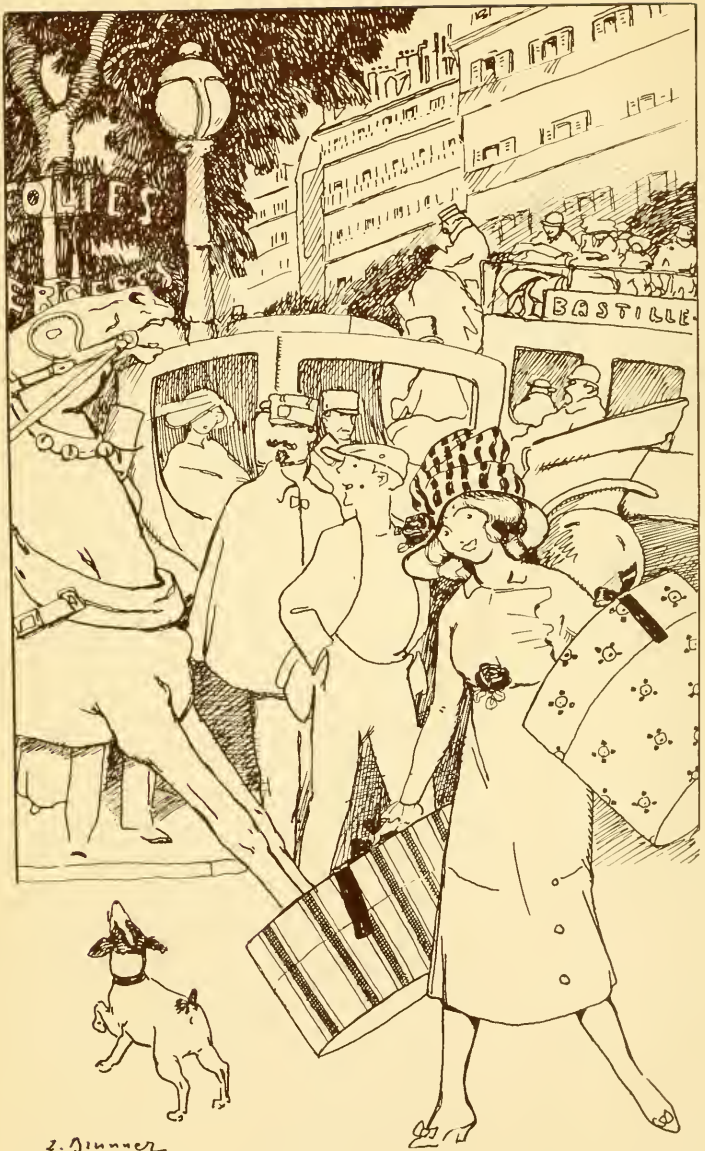








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Z. Ginner

THE MOVEMENT ON THE PARIS BOULEVARDS DERIVES MUCH OF ITS PICTURESQUENESS FROM THE PONDEROUS OMNIBUS



# SENSATIONS OF PARIS

BY

ROWLAND STRONG

AUTHOR OF "WHERE AND HOW TO DINE IN PARIS," ETC.

WITH FIFTY-SIX ILLUSTRATIONS



LONDON  
JOHN LONG, LIMITED  
NORRIS STREET, HAYMARKET

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TO  
MY AMERICAN FRIEND  
JULES MONTANT  
TO REMIND HIM OF  
MANY A PLEASANT TRAMP AND  
MERRY MEAL



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# SENSATIONS OF PARIS

## CHAPTER I

### THE SPIRIT OF THE BOULEVARD

WE had ordered *coupes Jack*, but the waiter declared that but two ices remained, of which one was a *coupe Jack*, and this my companion, a young Cambridge don, expressed a preference for. I contented myself with a *glace melon*, which, shaped and coloured like a slice of canteloup, was delicately flavoured as to its inner portion with the juice of fresh melon, and had a broad green rind of pistachio. This was absolutely the last ice—the last thing—served at Tortoni's. Tortoni, with tears upon his face, was helping the waiter to put up the shutters. It was midnight, the hour at which the historic Boulevard café was advertised to be closed for ever. We alone lingered upon the doomed premises—Marshal MacMahon had just left—and it was not the least tragic part of the situation that the only hands stretched out in sympathy to the grief-stricken Tortoni at that

funereal moment were those of foreigners who were in no sense of the term boulevardiers.

“Messieurs,” said Tortoni, when we asked him why it had become necessary to close the famous establishment, “*que voulez-vous? Le Boulevard se meurt!*” (What will you? The Boulevard dies!) The *mot* has been quoted since by others than ourselves who were not present when it was uttered. It forms the burden of the lamentations of many an old boulevardier who mistakes his own senility for that of the Boulevard. Tortoni’s is now a boot-shop. Once it was the rendezvous of all that was boulevardier in Paris. It was there that the brilliant journalist and author, Aurélien Scholl, held, in the late eighties, the undisputed sceptre of Parisian esprit—of wit in the true Boulevard sense. More than one familiar figure—that of Scholl among others—disappeared from the Boulevard after the closing of Tortoni’s, but only to be replaced by successors not less brilliant or worthy. For the Boulevard bends, but it does not break. It surrenders, but it does not die. It bends architecturally in a graceful curve, following the line of the old city ramparts of pre-Revolutionary times. Note that only that portion of the Boulevards extending from the Madeleine to the Faubourg Montmartre



THE BOULEVARD BY NIGHT

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constitutes the Boulevard proper. Sentimentally it bends with equal grace in the directions of new persons and new things and new ideas—with its most gallant bow toward the American woman, whose claim to rival the Parisienne in beauty, esprit, and deportment, it frankly acknowledges; enthusiastically toward the automobile and the “Métropolitain,” which are transforming its historic thoroughfares; loyally toward the *entente cordiale* with Great Britain, which has revolutionized its politics and softened the tone of its voice.

I have said that it surrenders. It surrenders old and cherished prejudices to modern arguments. It has something of the apathy of Nature in the presence of the changes wrought by Time. Its youthful suppleness never deserts it. A mysterious force, constantly renewing its vital saps and juices, preserves it from decay.

Whole quarters of Paris come and go. The Palais Royal, formerly the elysium of Parisian gaiety and dissipation; the Place des Vosges, where the nobles of Louis XIII.'s Court had their town residences, are but phantoms of irrevocable splendours. Grass and the street gamin have invaded their echoing pavements and crumbling colonnades. The aristocratic faubourgs of St. Honoré and St. Germain, with

their old-time magnificence, their proud, closed-in air, their territorial wealth of gardens, are slowly fading away. The encroaching wave of democracy narrows every year their flower-strewn boundaries. The Ternes, after a short chrysalis existence as a slum, has blossomed out into a suburban Mayfair. Montparnasse, vexed at an invasion of Anglo-Saxon artists and art critics, packed up one day its colour-boxes and easels, and transported itself bodily to Montmartre. Even in the heart of the city, revolutions and upheavals have been so complete and thorough that the Paris of Balzac is, with the exception of the Boulevard, already a thing of the past. Who would recognize in that grimy wine-shop in the populous Rue Montorgueil the once famous Rocher de Cancale, where Rastignac, with the other witty exquisites of the *Illusions Perdues*, was accustomed to dine at the then fashionable hour of five? Certain mural caricatures by Gavarni, which cannot be sold, being painted on the plastered wall, alone survive of its former glories. But Monsieur Pécune, its old proprietor, might still have been met with on the Boulevard a couple of years ago, pondering the memories of the great men and the great *festins* of the past (as a child he had known the author of the *Comédie Humaine*).



Paul de Kock has left us a picture of the Boulevard as he knew it in the thirties, and in its essence it has not changed. He noted that the Boulevard des Italiens has been renamed more than once, chiefly for political reasons. But even when it was known as the Boulevard de Gand, in honour of Louis XVIII., who was at Ghent when he recovered the French throne, and earlier still when it was called the Boulevard Coblenz on equally trivial grounds, it was the chief sensory nerve, as it were, in the complex anatomy of Paris. Its pavements were furnished with chairs (since relegated to the fronts, or "terraces," of the cafés), which in fine weather accommodated all the brilliant gossips of the town, of both sexes, who met to discuss the political situation, the latest fashion, the latest book, the newest theatrical star, the latest *on dit*, and one another. From the shock of these contending ideas, from the multicoloured medley of points of view, of bon mots, of witty or scandalous anecdotes, and the intercourse of the curiously varied personalities grouped with them, were day by day and hour by hour evolved the verdict and the edict of the Boulevard. Cigar-smoking is no longer a questionable novelty, as it was in Paul de Kock's time, nor do elegant Parisiennes sweep the pavement with

their crinolines, but the mentality of the Boulevard remains the same.

The Boulevard survives because it is essential to Paris. The London parks have been described as the lungs of London. The Parisians, of whom so many are from Marseilles, are an outdoor-living people, and they have the loquacity of the South. The Boulevard is a needed outlet for their expansiveness. Its pavements are the widest in Paris. Its cafés and restaurants are the most numerous and best appointed. And if it be true that all roads lead to Rome, it may equally be said of the Boulevard that it is the highway to every living point of interest in Paris—to the Chamber of Deputies, the Presidential Palace, if you are moving westward; to the Senate and the Panthéon if more aged and reposeful scenes beckon you. The ample proportions of the Boulevard are necessary to the Parisian for his gesticulations, and for the breadth of his ideas on moral, social, and political topics. Its avenues of luxuriant trees supply in summer a grateful shade for the lounge, the dreamer, and the talker. The Boulevard is the throat of Paris, and its palate as well. Nowhere are the nuances of French popular thought and feeling expressed with so much precision and authority

as on the Boulevard. Erudition, laborious scientific investigation, the high intellectual life, invest with a peculiar atmosphere of dignified and cloistered calm the old quarters of the Luxembourg and the Sorbonne, where the University professors mostly live. Here are the homes of composers, of painters, of sculptors, of novelists, of historians. Here are the intellectual cuisines or workshops of Paris. But there is little about them that is specifically Parisian. They have no *welt-staedtisch* or cosmopolitan interests. Their specialism escapes immediate generalization. They are *excentric*. It is on the Boulevard that the delicate meats of the mind, prepared in the tranquil seclusion of these unassuming and inexpensive dependencies of the great city, are tasted and judged.

The Boulevard makes and mars the reputation of a savant with the same imperial authority and assumption of omniscience that it applies to politics and the arts, to cooking and religion, to all subjects that come within the scope of human criticism. And inasmuch as Paris leads France, and the Boulevard inspires Paris, it is the opinion of the Boulevard which for the time being prevails. These judgments are often superficial; they are based in many, if not most,

cases upon a lack of knowledge as complete as the arrogance which makes them possible ; but they constitute an accepted formula of the hour, a formula which, owing to the suppleness and force of survival inherent to the Boulevard, is never final. For the ignorance of the Boulevard is immense, instinctive, and wilful. It is feminine both in its quality and in its comprehensiveness, this capricious, elegant, and distinguished ignorance which is at once the limitation and part of the unique charm of the Boulevard ; and I am not advancing too much when I say that the brain of the Boulevard is feminine, an intuitive, illogical, witty, and fascinating brain, set in the prettiest and the most mobile of heads.

The Boulevard is a kingdom—an *imperium in imperio*—without any acknowledged king, but with a large number of pretenders to the throne. With the rise of the Republic in France, an aristocracy of intellect has taken the place of the old aristocracy of birth, and actually governs the country in its stead. A similar change has been effected on the Boulevard. The days of the dandies, of the titled *noceurs* led by the Duc de Gramont-Caderousse, the Marquis of Hertford, Lord “Arsouille,” are over. Even the Maison Dorée, on whose narrow staircase

the Duke of Hamilton, after a copious dinner, fell and broke his neck, has been swept away. One must go to Montmartre, to the Taverne du Tabarin (a far less aristocratic haunt, with none of the culinary attractions of the defunct Maison Dorée), to find a similar staircase which can claim to have recently caused, under like circumstances—though in what company!—the death of an English peer. Half a century ago the title of “King of the Boulevard” would have been given to some great courtier and wealthy nobleman, a Morny or a Demidoff, whose equipage and outriders would have added a summer radiance to the Avenue de l’Impératrice (now the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne), who would have been an habitué of the “grand sixteen,” that famous dining-room at the Café Anglais where, on one occasion, Cora Pearl, the most extravagant *demi-mondaine* of her day, was served up, in the costume of Eve, on a silver platter. The automobile, with its waterproofs and goggles, has supplanted the brilliant *équipages à la Daumont* and the sumptuous liveries of the Imperial epoch. Seekers after mere sensual pleasure and riotous dissipation no longer have their needs supplied by the Boulevard; they must go farther afield—to Maxim’s, the Rat Mort, the Abbaye de Thélème,

to the Tabarin, where the *jeunesse dorée* of the present generation repeat at less expense of either taste or money the wild junketings of their fathers and grandfathers.

The Boulevard, if less given over than of yore to the worship of Mammon, is at the same time more Bohemian than it was, and thus truly reflects the most typical transfiguration which has taken place of recent years in the general aspect of French society. Ever since Gambetta established the republican principles of "graft" as the basis of the government of the country, it is from Bohemia that France has drawn her most representative public forces. Bohemia, which long ago conquered literature, art, and the press, is predominant in the Chamber, claims a goodly contingent in the Senate, and is encroaching upon the higher ranks of the army and navy. Already it disposes of most, if not all, of the chief offices of the magistracy and of the State. What more typically Bohemian careers could well be imagined, for instance, than that of the genial Monsieur Clemenceau, who so short a time ago was the most powerful Minister and the most influential statesman in France? If there be a King of the Boulevard, he is a Bohemian without doubt; and though since Aurélien Scholl's death the

title is held by certain critics of contemporary history to be in abeyance, the general voice would, I am sure, attribute it without hesitation to Monsieur Ernest Lajeunesse, were not the brilliant author of *Les Nuits et les Ennuis de nos Plus Illustres Contemporains* so anxious to disclaim the honour.

In certain cafés which have absorbed the old clientele of Tortoni's, Monsieur Ernest Lajeunesse holds every morning, afternoon, and evening, his court of wit, of which court, be it said, he is sovereign in the widest sense of the term, wielding an absolute power, due perhaps to a wise concentration in his own person of other court functions than that of king, being at once his own court chronicler, court jester, and, in moments of justifiable irritation with his subjects, court executioner. His novel *Le Boulevard* yields in nothing for fineness of analysis and brilliance of imagination to the most accomplished works of Stendhal and Anatole France. His sonnets, treating of contemporary events and persons in a characteristic vein of ironical paradox and impatient indulgence, are so many encyclicals issued to the faithful from the unholy see of the Boulevard.

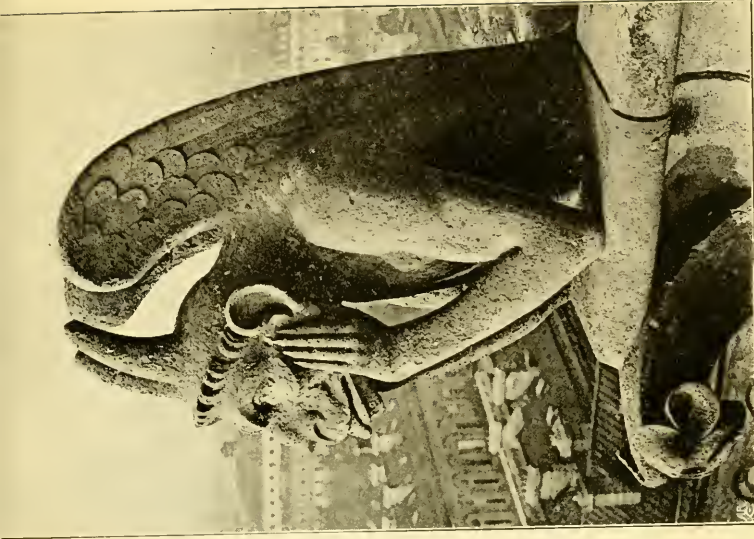
Ernest Lajeunesse is a collector of bric-à-brac, whose *flair* is the admiration of the old book-

sellers of the quays, and of the antiquity-dealers who colonize the Rue Drouot and the neighbourhood of the Hôtel des Ventes, and, like a wise monarch, he wears the most portable treasures of his museum on his back or carries them in his pocket. I have seen him sipping at his glass of white absinthe with an authentic Collar of the Golden Fleece (a marvel of sixteenth-century goldsmith's work) round his neck, the waistcoat about him that Lavoisier wore upon the scaffold, and three priceless episcopal rings upon his index-finger. His room in an hotel in the Boulevard des Filles du Calvaire (he has a flat somewhere, but never occupies it) is hung with miniatures which represent a fortune, is heaped from floor to ceiling with books and prints and military uniforms, and the wonder is how he gets into bed. He has gathered unique collections of walking-sticks and seals, of which he makes habitual use, as also of sabres, with which he occasionally threatens, and even pricks (to the effusion of blood), a wearisome or unruly subject. He is an admirable caricaturist, whose wittiest caricature is himself. Poet and *polémiste*, novelist, dramatist, and politician; a prince of good fellows, but capable of the cruellest repartee—his tongue is as sharp as a woman's; critic, connoisseur, gourmet, man of the world,





MONSIEUR ERNEST LAJEUNESSE, THE KING OF  
THE BOULEVARD



"LE PENSEUR," THAT SPHINX-HEARTED GARGOYLE  
OF NOTRE DAME



and wit; hated by a few (as his duelling record proclaims), liked and esteemed by the many, he personifies the Boulevard in flesh and blood, and, epitomizing its varied genius, is clothed, like a high-priest, in its hieratic raiment and adorned with its symbolic attributes. Thus he presents a somewhat weird appearance, and excites much public curiosity when walking abroad. In the throng of admirers that daily gathers round his throne are Dukes, Counts, Barons, Prefects, stockbrokers, money-lenders, composers, poets, painters, sculptors, caricaturists, philosophers, dandies, warriors, explorers, photographers, Jews, and fair women.

To describe or even name all those who can rightly claim the title of boulevardier, and who daily promenade the historic half-mile of pavement between the Madeleine and the corner of the Rue Richelieu, would require a volume. They form a corporation without definable cohesion, a club without rules or committee, for admission to which the possession of personality constitutes the sole claim; and being in a sense everybody—the *tout Boulevard*—their influence is immense.

The life of the Boulevard begins about eleven in the morning, when Monsieur Ernest Lajeunesse, who sets an excellent example to other monarchs

by never varying his habits or quitting his kingdom, may be discovered at a certain café sipping his *apéritif* and glancing over the morning papers. Before the critical eyes of the boulevardiers the ever-changing procession of the great Capital of Light passes along in dazzling and thunderous movement. Familiar faces are saluted and greeted, faces that complete the design and colour of the Boulevard like the master touches which give final character to a picture. Here comes the familiar slouch of Ribot. There goes Déroulède, in the plaid trousers and curly-brimmed hat of a patriotism which is too old-fashioned to forget Alsace and Lorraine. The erect and black-haired sportsman, with the immaculate back parting, the tired face, the English groom at his side, and driving two magnificent bays, is Prince Troubetskoi. There is Hébrard, the editor of the *Temps*. Who is the bent old man who has already passed in front of the café three times? He is a Russian Baron who for twenty years has paraded the Boulevard five hours daily. He speaks to no one. No one knows the mystery of his life. The Boulevard will miss him when one day his wearying promenade comes to an end. That was Réjane in the little open carriage drawn by two mules.

As the day advances, the newspaper boys yell out the evening editions of the *Patrie*, the *Intransigeant*, the *Presse*, the *Liberté*, and the *Resultats des Courses* (the latest winners). Beggars linger at the café tables. They, too, are familiar features of the Boulevard. There is the old whitebeard with the mechanical dolls, not one of which he has been known ever to sell ; so the Boulevard pronounces him to be a *mouchard*, or agent of the secret police. Another, silent with outstretched hand, who wears the military medal, is (so the waiter says) a shameless miser, with extensive house property. Sinister-looking acrobats perform hurried tricks, gather together a few coins, and then dash round the corner to escape the police. As the day wanes, the Boulevard becomes suffused with a rich sunset glow, meeting the freshly-lit electric lights, while a fine iridescent spray scattered over the tops of the Boulevard trees results from the collision, just as if a wave of moonlight had struck a rainbow. From nine to twelve the Boulevard is again in session. The air and sky are ablaze with thousands of luminous jewels of all hues. The electric advertisements, the transparent kiosks, mock the moon and stars. It is past midnight. Ernest Lajeunesse leaps on to the last Madeleine-

Bastille omnibus. The pavements are deserted, but for the policemen patrolling two by two, with revolvers at their belts, and for certain dark forms darting out of corners or huddling upon benches and who are also of the Boulevard and claim to have a king. The last café is closed. The electric lights become fainter and die out. Dawn begins to shimmer above the heights of Montmartre. With one eye open the Boulevard sleeps.

## CHAPTER II

### A PARISIAN MARRIAGE

MARIE DUVAL was nineteen last birthday. She is the typical Parisienne of the middle class. Both her parents are Parisians, and all her life has been spent at No. 28, Rue Ste. Placide, that grimy, age-beaten, but still active street on the left bank of the Seine, which has the Bon Marché at one end of it, and Montparnasse, with its colony of artists, at the other.

Marie Duval loves Paris with an all-embracing love. Equally dear to her are its long, shabby, uniform streets in what are called the commercial districts, its pompous avenues, its brilliance and its drabness. Every year she accompanies her parents for a fortnight during August to a little watering-place on the Manche coast, called Le Bourg d'Ault, where at the Hôtel de Paris you may stop for six francs per head and per day, with excellent board, all included; but she is always glad to get back again. "Ah, Paris!" she exclaims, as she is

driven home from the Northern railway-station —“ there is but one Paris !” Then she kisses her mother, and pats her father on the cheek. She is, in fact, a thorough child of the city ; for though her parents are respectable people, and have devoted real care to her education, it was largely in the street that her quite early youth was spent. Here you have a democratic trait which is peculiar to the middle-class life of Paris, explained too, in some measure, by the love of all French people for outdoor life, and by the smallness and stuffiness of Parisian dwellings, especially in the older parts of the city. Under the watchful eye of the concierge, or janitor, Marie Duval, from the age of four, was accustomed to play with the other little children of the *quartier* on the pavement outside the house where her parents lived.

When she grew a bit older she would go with the same companions (and in care of the eldest of them) to the Luxembourg Gardens, which are but a stone's-throw away, and great is her affection for its tall silvery fountain, its orange and pomegranate trees, its swaying hollyhocks and masses of red geraniums, its great scented rosery, and majestic palace, to say nothing of the little wooden rocking-horses, which cost a halfpenny to ride on, and the roped-in ground



where her uncle, with some of the retired tradespeople of the neighbourhood, still plays croquet.

It is now three years since Marie left the convent school, and she enjoys all the liberty of a young woman, for the old French system of keeping girls in a kind of artificial fools' paradise until they are married is going out of fashion. She is tall, and slim, and blonde, with features which are prettily irregular. Her small nose has a tendency to turn upwards at the tip, her lips are small and well shaped, her complexion is a little pale, and her eyes are large and blue-grey, neither too round nor too narrow, and in their quick glances and dancing light, good-humour, gaiety, gentleness, and a keen sense of life and fun, seem to be ever at games with one another. She is too fond of movement to be ever lazy or fretful, and whether polishing up the furniture in her parents' sitting-room, or mending socks, or scraping carrots in the kitchen, she is as bright and gay, and chirruping as merrily, as the impudent little Parisian sparrows who are clamoring for bread-crumbs on the window-sill. Marie knows all about needlework, which was taught her by the good Sisters of the Sacré Cœur, whom the Government, much to her indignation, has recently expelled, and it is hardly an exaggeration to say

that she could cook before she could talk. She makes her own clothes, and possesses that magical power, almost peculiar to the Parisienne, which foreigners notice, of looking well in things which are perfectly hideous in themselves, if criticized singly.

Summer and winter Marie rises at six. About seven she sallies forth to purchase the household bread—a two-pound loaf about a yard and a half long, which is called a “flute.” At that early hour of the morning all the streets of Paris, including the Rue Ste. Placide, are lined with square zinc boxes, in which the inhabitants deposit their kitchen refuse. It is not an appetizing sight, though no true Parisian minds it. The rag-pickers, with their picturesque hods and iron-pointed sticks, sort the boxes over for anything that can be put aside and sold at the innumerable rubbish fairs which are held every Sunday in the Paris suburbs. Stray dogs rummage in them for a breakfast, and finally the municipal dust-carts carry away what is left.

Marie was not a hundred yards from her home when, one morning, her dress caught and was badly torn on the jagged edge of one of these *poubelles*, for so they are called from the name of the Prefect of the Seine who first

ordained their use. At that moment there happened to be passing the son of the iron-monger, whose shop is at the Bon Marché end of the Rue Ste. Placide, young Monsieur Édouard Brunet, just returned from completing his two years' military service in the 10th Regiment of Dragoons. Édouard is a ruddy, well-set-up youth, with hard, regular features, black hair, and staring blue eyes—in fact, not unlike a masculine Dutch doll. Marie and he used to play together when they were both small children, and they celebrated their First Communion in the same year, she in a vast enveloping white cambric veil, with a bunch of orange-blossoms—a bride's costume, in fact—and he in a little black jacket-suit with a white tie and white waistcoat, and a large white satin bow with a long streamer on his right arm. Édouard was also carrying a wheaten "flute" in his hand; and being more glib of speech than his wooden appearance would lead you to anticipate—but then, you see, he too is a Parisian born and bred—

"*Mon Dieu*, Mademoiselle Marie!" he exclaimed, "I fear you have torn your dress."

"Thank you, Monsieur Édouard, but it is nothing," replied Marie.

"Let me fix up the tear with this safety-

pin," said Édouard, producing one from his pocket, and leaning his "flute" up against the guilty refuse-box.

"But you are amiability itself!" said Marie, smiling.

Édouard having deftly adjusted the safety-pin, "Mademoiselle Marie," he continued, "there is a dressmaker at No. 10, who is a friend of my mother's, and she will sew up your dress in a minute, if you will let me take you there."

"But with pleasure!" laughs Marie.

So to the dressmaker's they go, and Édouard wants to pay; but the dressmaker turns out to be an old schoolfellow of Marie's, and with silvery laughter refuses, in spite of Édouard's protestations, to accept the money which he is preparing to extract from the innermost recesses of a much-worn leather purse.

Then Marie flies off home, fearing that her parents will think that she has been run down by an automobile, and to them she breathlessly relates her adventure. "He's a nice boy, Édouard!" is the remark she winds up with. "I always had a *béguin* for Édouard!"

The *béguin* is the wide cap worn by nuns, but in Parisian slang it means a "special fancy" for someone. Marie makes this frank admission

to her parents because she has no false modesty, and has long ago made up her mind to get married as soon as a favourable chance presents itself. Monsieur and Madame Duval exchange a meaning glance, and seize the first opportunity of Marie's leaving the room to say to one another: "I see no objection." And each knows perfectly well what the other has in mind.

Also when Marie comes back, trilling a light song, and bringing in the smoking coffee-pot from a kitchen the size of a pocket-handkerchief, which fits on to the back of the dining-room like an extra-deep cupboard, she guesses, from the look her parents give her, what they were thinking about. So, without saying a word, she just kisses them both. And they call her a "sly one" and laugh, and Marie laughs, and asks them what are they plotting, and they both swear that they are not plotting anything, Madame Duval adding that it is no crime to have one's thoughts.

Monsieur Duval is a *maître-tonnelier*—that is to say, a master-cooper. Two little wooden barrels painted red and black are hung up high on either side of his shop as signs of his trade, and his window is filled with little oaken pitchers bound with polished brass of the

prettiest effect imaginable ; in fact, so artistic are they both in shape and colour that many of the foreign students who pass along the Rue Ste. Placide on their way to the Montparnasse buy them as souvenirs. One shape in particular, which resembles a clarinet, is very popular. But the most lucrative part of Monsieur Duval's business consists in bottling wine. He charges four shillings for each hogshead which he puts in bottle, and makes a further profit by supplying the corks and the sealing-wax. As he bottles at least three hogsheads a day, most of his waking life is spent in dark cellars lit only by a twisted taper, a *rat de cave*, or cellar-rat, as it is called. He has had six children, apart from Marie. Three are dead, and every first Sunday in the month Madame Duval goes to the Bagneux Cemetery to lay flowers on their graves. Two girls are comfortably married. Raoul, the only son, has run away.

“Father,” said Raoul one morning, “I don't want to be a master-cooper. I must see sunlight sometimes. I can't live always in the dark with a 'cellar-rat.' I want to do something else.”

The father was silent for a moment. Dimly the bitter thought was forming in his mind : “To bring my children up and keep them from



MADAME DUVAL AT THE DOOR OF THE COOPER'S  
SHOP



SIGNING THE REGISTER AT MADEMOISELLE DUVAL'S  
WEDDING





want I have gone without the light of the sun for thirty years." Then he said: "Very well, my little one; go, earn thy crust elsewhere."

And the boy went. Within a month afterwards Monsieur Duval's hair had turned grey, but he never again mentioned his son's name. For three weeks Madame Duval wept silently; but, as the tears simply coursed down her face, and she made no grimaces to speak of, Monsieur Duval pretended to take no notice. Short, stout, and taciturn, with an overwhelming sense of duty, especially where family, he himself, and money matters, are concerned, Monsieur Duval is a not uncommon type of Frenchman. The iron-bound oak of his trade seems to have entered into his soul. He has never owed or loaned a cent, and never during the whole course of their lifetime did he once thwart the wishes of his father and mother. Raoul is a black speck on the domestic horizon. His escapade may quite possibly compromise his sister's chances of marrying well. Driven to desperation by poverty, Raoul may commit some dreadful act which will disgrace the whole family. The neighbours foresee this, and look a little askance at the Duvals. Madame Brunet, Édouard's mother, is a domineering,

calculating woman, and it is likely that she has already made plans for her son's marriage.

In France young people under twenty-one years of age cannot marry without the consent of both their parents. Should the parents be dead, the consent of the grandparents must be obtained. Once the limit of twenty-one years is reached, should the parents or grandparents still remain obdurate, the marriage can take place, but only after the parties have served the opposing relatives, or guardians, with a polite intimation on registered stamped paper that they purpose overriding the family veto. It sometimes happens that the parents and grandparents are all dead, in which case certificates to that effect must be obtained from the Mayors of the different communes where these deceased persons habitually resided. This is often a lengthy and costly affair. In the poorer classes it not infrequently happens that the parents have to be bribed to secure their consent.

A case came under the writer's notice of a mother who refused to consent to her son's marriage until the young woman he was engaged to had made her a present of a new stove, costing fifty francs. Then a further complication arose. The Mayor of the commune where the mother lived was courting her daughter, who wanted

a bicycling costume. The careful Mayor suggested to the mother that she might still make her consent to her son's marriage conditional on the young woman he was engaged to furnishing a further sum of fifty francs for the purchase of her future sister-in-law's bloomers. But at this point the marriage negotiations were broken off. The would-be bride was willing to make pecuniary sacrifices to secure her own and her lover's happiness, but she drew the line at giving another girl a dress.

No such disaster, however, is to befall the matrimonial schemes of Marie Duval and Édouard Brunet. To be sure, Madame Brunet, who is a buxom woman with a long pink face, pointed chin, hard brown eyes, and abundant grey hair drawn very tightly above her forehead, was at first strongly opposed to the engagement. But Édouard is a serious and persevering lad. At the age of sixteen he was still going about with bare legs and a knickerbocker suit which his mother has made for him, without feeling in the least bit ridiculous. During his military service he never once incurred the smallest punishment for breach of discipline. He has never revolted openly against his mother's wishes, but he is an unconscious diplomatist of the first rank; for, by never contradicting

her, he invariably ends by getting his own way.

When Madame Brunet discovered that nothing could disturb her son's respectful equanimity or alter his determination, she gave in. She set herself to calculate the pros and cons of the marriage with Marie. Monsieur Duval had no son (Raoul having revolted) to whom he could bequeath his business, but his chief assistant was willing to buy the goodwill for £2,000. This sum would ultimately have to be divided among the four Duval children. Monsieur Duval had given both of his married daughters a *dot* of £400, so that would be Marie's marriage portion, too. Édouard, on the other hand, would succeed to his father's ironmongery business, being an only child. It represented an income of £800 a year. He would inherit £2,000 from his mother. Furthermore, his maternal grandfather was a retired Captain of the army and decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honour. From the social point of view, this was a serious asset. Clearly, Édouard was a far better *parti* than Marie. But Madame Brunet was alive to Marie's excellent personal qualities. She had "order," a supreme merit in the eyes of a clever household manager like Madame Brunet. She was active, well

educated, and intelligent, and had the makings of a good wife.

The outcome was that Monsieur and Madame Brunet paid a ceremonious visit to Monsieur and Madame Duval, of which the latter had previously been warned by Édouard, though they expressed much delighted surprise at so unexpected an honour. On being informed by the Brunets that they had come to demand Mademoiselle Marie's hand for their son Édouard, Monsieur and Madame Duval replied that, while extremely flattered by the request, they must first consult their daughter, whose answer would no doubt be forthcoming on the following day. Accordingly, the next afternoon Monsieur and Madame Brunet receive an equally ceremonious visit from Monsieur and Madame Duval, who acquaint them with Marie's acceptance of Édouard's suit, and invite them to dinner, together with Édouard and his grandparents, for a few days later. In the meanwhile Édouard is authorized to bring Marie flowers. The dinner is a solemn affair. Madame Brunet and Madame Duval are in funereal black silk, Marie wears a white blouse and a pink ribbon, and the men are in frock-coats and white ties. Captain Boucher, Madame Brunet's father, looks very dignified with his cross and ribbon

of the Legion of Honour. Over their wine he and Monsieur Duval lament the excellence of the *vins ordinaires* of half a century ago. Captain Boucher is inclined to think that the Government is at fault, while Monsieur Duval contends that it is the art of bottling which is no longer, with rare exceptions, what it used to be.

Édouard presents Marie with a ring, and from this moment they are officially betrothed, and he may publicly kiss her.

Sweet champagne is served at the dessert. The chief items of the menu are a *vol-au-vent aux poissons*, a piece of beef with olives, and a roast chicken, with watercress. The *vol-au-vent* comes from the best pastrycook's in the neighbourhood, and bears the name of the firm raised in large letters on the crust in proof of authenticity, whilst the rest of the dinner, as Madame Duval informs Madame Brunet, who beams with approval, was entirely cooked by Marie.

Dinners are given by the grandparents on both sides, and a dinner, though of a less official kind, follows the signing of the marriage contract at the notary's.

Then the banns are put up both at the Mayor's office and the church, and Marie and Édouard

are deluged with advertising circulars from all kinds of tradespeople ; but their outlay is comparatively small. For what is not actually provided by the parents is obtained in mysterious roundabout methods at large reductions of price, thanks to the long-standing commercial connections of both Monsieur Duval and Monsieur Brunet. The Duvals supply the bride's trousseau and the household linen, and the Brunets the furniture of the little *appartement* in the Ste. Placide quarter where the young people are to live.

In France no church marriage is valid which has not been preceded by a civil function conducted by the Mayor. When the wedding-day arrives, the entire party, numbering sixteen, start off in four immense landaus lined with cream-coloured silk. The coachmen, in ancient curly-brimmed top-hats, have big bunches of orange-blossom in their coats, and their whips are tied with white silk bows. The entire *quartier* is alive to see the bridal party set out, and pocket-handkerchiefs are waved from all the windows of the Rue Ste. Placide, where Marie is a universal favourite and has been known to the inhabitants all her life. Marie is in a huge white tulle veil covering a white satin dress, with a little diadem of orange-

blossoms in her hair and a big bunch of orange-blossoms in her white-gloved hands. The bridegroom is in evening dress, with a shiny black crush hat, which comes down nearly to his ears. Similarly habited are the two *garçons d'honneur* who accompany the two bridesmaids, to whom they have presented silver brooches. The bridesmaids are in white, without veils. The two *témoins*, or witnesses, required by the law are Captain Boucher, in full uniform, and Monsieur Charlot, a corporal in Édouard's regiment, also in uniform.

After Édouard and Marie, in response to the Mayor's question, put to each of them in turn, have declared their free and full wish to be united, the Mayor reads to them the articles of the Legal Code, in which their respective duties and rights as married people are defined. Then he makes a speech. When the parties are personally unknown to him, it is his rule to trace in eloquent language the origin of the marriage institution from the time "of our common ancestors, Adam and Eve"; but, as both the Duval and Brunet families are prominent *commerçants* of the *quartier*, and old and valued acquaintances of the Mayor's, he introduces local colour by tracing ironmongery to the time of the Phœnicians, and declares that



Monsieur Duval is not only an ideal husband and father, but, by reason of his unrivalled skill in the bottling line, a real benefactor to society at large. Captain Boucher he places, in a series of brilliant historical parallels, somewhere between Achilles and Marshal Ney, and this gives him a chance to pay a skilful compliment to the regular army as represented by the corporal. French Mayors' speeches are nothing if not pedantic. Then he takes advantage of the privilege attaching to his semi-paternal functions to kiss the bride and both bridesmaids. All the party then sign the register.

The ceremony at the church is simple and impressive. Édouard and Marie kneel on prie-dieu, and behind them, also kneeling, are the parents and relatives, the witnesses, the *garçons d'honneur* and the bridesmaids. The curé who baptized Édouard and Marie, prepared them both for their First Communion, and heard their first confessions, makes them a charming little address about the Christian duties of the married state. There is some music, a couple of simple hymns—*cantiques*—warbled rather than sung to the accompaniment of the choir harmonium, and finally the nuptial benediction. From the church, after more signing of registers, the party, now in the highest of spirits, is driven

to Neuilly, where the banquet, or *noce*, has been ordered at one of those vast rambling restaurants, with saloons to seat a hundred guests, which in the Paris suburbs make a speciality of marriage feasts. As they drive up, a ragged urchin thrusts through the bride's carriage window a bouquet of lilies of the valley which he has plucked in the woods round Paris, and cries: "Ten sous, ten sous! It will bring you luck, madame." Marie utters a little half-suppressed scream.

The boy, who has caught sight of the bride's face, snatches back the bouquet and dashes away.

"He's mad," remarks Édouard. "The police ought to suppress those young ruffians. Did he frighten thee, cherished one?"

"Only startled me a little," says Marie, recovering her colour. The bride's eyes and her father's meet in a flash of intelligence. Not a muscle of his face has moved. Thank goodness, Madame Duval was so busy gathering up her daughter's veil that she did not recognize, in the starving flower-seller, the prodigal Raoul!

Including red and white wine, and coffee, the *noce* banquet costs five francs, or four shillings, per head. *Hors d'œuvre*, roast beef, chicken, salad, cheese, and dessert, are comprised in the menu. Four bottles of champagne at four

shillings each are ordered additionally. It is late in the afternoon before the dessert is reached, and then everybody is called upon to sing a song. Monsieur Charlot, who is the life and soul of the party (no Parisian *noce* is complete without a soldier in uniform, whose traditional privilege it is to make comic love to the mothers and flirt seriously with the bridesmaids), has just reached the second verse of that familiar drinking-song "Un petit verre de Clicquot!" when Madame Duval is seen to be in tears. It is the song Raoul used to sing on his father's birthday when a little lad. A hard look from Marie convinces the corporal that he has made a *gaffe*, which is French for a "break," and instantly, with that histrionic cleverness which is the birthright of every Parisian, he begins to stammer and stutter, and stares wildly about him in comic confusion, and declares that he has forgotten how the song goes on. So he starts another one, and, in the applause that follows it, Madame Duval, with Marie holding her hand under the table, manages, after a few spasmodic twitchings of the lips, to pull herself together, and her lissom old face, which had crumpled up like a silk pocket-handkerchief that had been unduly sat upon, smooths out again.

A photographer, brought upon the scene by the proprietor of the restaurant, takes portraits of the bride and bridegroom standing alone together, and then in a group with the rest of the party. A general move is now made to the Bois de Boulogne. There is no prettier or more characteristic sight in Paris on a fine day than these bridal parties straggling about, though always more or less in processional order, on the lawns and under the trees of the Bois. The background of green, pricked out with flowers, gives charming quality to the white dresses of bride and bridesmaids, the black-and-white evening dress of the bridegroom and his male friends, the blue and red of the inevitable soldier-guest. Every stranger has been pleased and amused by this so common vision in the Bois—the bridal merry-making in the open air of a Marie Duval and an Édouard Brunet.

But the fête is not yet at an end. From the Bois the bridal party is conveyed in state to Auteuil, to another rambling restaurant, where *apéritifs*, or appetizers, are served, and a dance takes place, followed by a dinner. It is now time for the bride and bridegroom to depart. Édouard is in floods of tears at the thought of quitting his mother. Marie, too, is weeping upon the broad shoulders of Madame Duval.



MONSIEUR LAJEUNESSE'S COLLECTION OF MINIATURES

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Then they are driven away. Corporal Charlot has by this time exchanged his red, peaked cap for the hat of the principal bridesmaid, and they are singing an amorous duet. Monsieur Brunet and Monsieur Duval pay off the carriages, which have cost £1 each for the day. Then each family regains its home either by *métro* or omnibus. The next morning the entire party meets again—with the exception of Édouard and Marie—for a luncheon in the Bois de Vincennes. This is called the *lendemain de fête*, or the morrow of the feast. Its cost is shared by Édouard and Marie's parents. It is not quite so brilliant as was the *noce*, but the corporal continues his melodious flirtations at a great pace, and, in the opinion of the guests, there is little doubt that an engagement between Monsieur Charlot and the principal bridesmaid will be announced before long.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PANORAMA AND COLOUR OF PARIS

FROM the steps of the Basilica of the Sacré Cœur, from the summit of Montmartre, that world-famed “nipple,” underneath which beats the sacred heart of the Paris of Parisians, you may study the panorama of the city’s colour.

Paris lies at your feet, not unlike a vast cemetery, an almost silent wilderness of stones—*almost silent*, for at this height the noise of the streets is nearly deadened, and the movement of their traffic is absorbed into their shadows.

But, if you listen, faint sounds will strike the ear, a rising dust of human voices, something that resembles the chirruping of a June breeze as it rustles over ripening wheat-fields, a dream-like music, not sad, because it is made up in a large measure of the calling of children one to another, but yet pathetic, for it is disembodied like a memory that comes from far away.

The sobbing of a calm sea’s wavelets on fine sand, the baaing of distant flocks of sheep, the



bubbling of champagne, are more or less vaguely suggested by this sound. It is not unlike the mysterious "summer hum," unearthly yet of



THE SACRÉ CŒUR AT MONTMARTRE.

the earth, which still puzzles naturalists, and might be, one fancies, first cousin to the music of the spheres.

Rising from the stones beneath you, this

attenuated symphony of noises gives them vibratory animation, much as the Mass music played on the organ within an ancient church, and *heard from without*, seems to be the very voice of the building, the soul of its walls and towers and painted windows, awakened and warmed into throbbing expression.

Thus the comparison with the cemetery is not altogether just, though, save for these haunting street echoes, the city down below has all the silence of the grave. The Invalides, the Panthéon, and the Opéra, with their green or gilded domes, Notre Dame, St. Sulpice, St. Vincent de Paul, and a dozen other churches, with their towers and spires, rise up, prouder mausoleums, from amidst the small-fry of this ocean of tombstones ; and, after all, what are these human habitations, what is a city, but an agglomeration of graves, a cemetery in which each succeeding generation buries the unachieved effort and dead ideals of its predecessor? or, if you will, a national fane—like royal St. Denis, whose towers are discernible to the right of where you stand—in which long dynasties of high thought and brilliant actions and gorgeous dreams, tricked out in the cloth of gold of victory, or swathed in the black shroud of disaster, lie magnificently sepulchred ?

Paris is a city of stone, and her predominating colours are white, with all its gradations of grey and drab, added to green and blue, but particularly blue. Her stone is a living stone with a human heart-throb, and, varying in date from a thousand years ago to yesterday, wears on its rugged surface an infinity of stone-tints. Her stretches of blue-tiled roofs, with their red chimneys, form a high transparent canopy of rose-lilac over this stoniness, which, grey in the mass, but burning white when the sun flashes on it, distinguishes Paris from New York with its red brick and brown stone, and London with its yellow brick and stucco.

One has also the impression, when gazing at this panorama of Paris, of a wide grey-white undulating shore, which the sea has left high and dry, covered with differently-sized heaps of blue-grey pebbles that are plentifully inter-mixed with small fragments of red clay. Above hangs a soft pearl-grey haze, which is almost transparent ether as far as one can clearly distinguish the forms of the houses, and then becomes gossamer and loose white wool. Across this limpidity light-brown streamers of smoke from the tall factory chimneys are carried by the wind. In the farther distance the rose-lilac simplifies itself into plain mauve, which

in its turn deepens on the horizon into darkening bands of purple ; but almost purple-black as are the ultimate stretches of the city's expanse, a constant iridescence haunts the jagged line where Paris seems to end. It gives to the panorama an ethereal but at the same time artificial air, as if one were in the presence of a marvellous piece of stage scenery, composed of materials not wholly opaque, and cunningly illuminated from behind and below.

Under the most typical of Parisian skies, which should be of a liquid, not overdeep blue, flecked with large white clouds, this theatrical suggestion, this dramatic effect, is intensified by the driving shadows and sudden flushes of white which play upon the wrinkled, stony face of the old city.

A few patches of green marking the waste lands awaiting the builder, the public parks, and the encircling woods, contrast dimly with the greys and drabs.

From the heights of Montmartre it is not possible to see the Seine. The inhabitants of this essentially Parisian quarter of Paris are shut off by an intervening barrier of many streets of tall squalid tenements from that gleaming vision, and few are likely to climb the tower of Notre Dame, whence the broad blue

sweep of the queenly river best shows itself, dividing the city into apparently two equal parts from east to west, flowing onwards in the sense of the cathedral's own peerless lines. Yet the Seine is to Paris as the tail to the peacock, the supreme orchestral outburst of her colour scheme. The brilliant white of the stone embankments, as the blue and silver stream swirls through the city, the green of the trees that border them, will be repeated all along the Seine's swift course to the sea in white chalk cliffs and siliceous banks, broad green pastures, and hanging woods.

The Seine is distinguished from all the rivers of France by this dazzling body-robe of blue, matching the sky, trimmed with silver and fringed with green. Instinctively the blue and white which are the dominant colours of Paris have been adopted into the city's armorial blazon.

The Marne, on the other hand, which is only a Paris river by adoption—for it flows into the Seine at Charenton, just outside the eastern confines of the city—is always of a deep green, clear as crystal, owing to its bed being of a fine white clay.

All the provinces of France have a distinctive colouring. The Champagne, with the aquamarine of the Marne River running through it,

and its undulating slopes covered with vineyards, is dark green. The blues and browns of Brittany are sorrowful and watery. Picardy is cold and prim in yellowish-grey. In lush Normandy the pastures are as green velvet, while the Norman chalk dunes have the rich friable whiteness of cream cheese. None of them possesses just that joyous combination of clear blue and serene white which is peculiar to the Department of the Seine, the old Île-de-France, whose capital is Paris.

People with a sense of colour know at once when they have passed from one to another of these departments merely from the different aspect of sky and earth. It may be objected that the boundaries of the French departments are artificial, but the designers of them have followed certain well-considered geological and ethnological lines, and, consciously or unconsciously, it is by the subtle suggestion of the soil itself, with its special atmosphere and history, that they have allowed themselves to be guided. There has been no serious mutilation of the respective physiognomies which distinguished the old provinces of France before the departments were created. Racial characteristics due to environment have remained the same, and, accompanying them, the peculiar

atmosphere and ground colours are plainly distinguishable.

Inevitably, in the Seine's passage through Paris, the blue and silver of its robe are blurred by contact with the volumes of smoke which occasionally hang upon its surface, and stained by the impurities which reach it from the streets. Though it quickly recovers its pristine blueness after the fortifications have been left behind, it is never again quite the unsophisticated river that it was before its Paris experience. Its waters are less limpid, its course more nervous, while at its meeting with the sea at Honfleur its colour and character have changed completely. There the vast stretches of mud over which it rolls—mud of Paris, mud of Rouen—give to the waters of the wide Seine estuary, reaching from Trouville to Le Havre, the half-dead *moiré* tones of oxidized silver. The great Parisian river dies magnificently, and no more gorgeous spectacle can be conceived than when, on a fine evening, the Seine at its juncture with the sea, where its ultimate cliffs fade away behind the summer haze into a powder of gold, burns, under the sunset light, a pale turquoise blue with weird reflections of brazen yellow, old gold, and cadaverous green. How different from its gentler and simpler

aspect as it huddles round the heart of Paris, warm purple and burnished gold where the sinking sun strikes it as it softly laps against the stone embankment of the Louvre, or sparkling blue dappled with milk-white beneath the silvery mists of the Paris morning !

The exceptionally pure air of Paris enhances her statuesque beauty, but her colour gamut is less rich and varied as compared with that of London. Her colours have less "body," if one may be permitted to borrow that expression from the wine-cellar, though it would be erroneous to say that they have less quality. They are less impersonal. Paris in her general attitude is far more anecdotic than London. The anecdotic, the talkative element is discernible in her colour. In London we have infinite colour, constantly shifting and changing, never revealing anything but itself, admirable and lovable as colour merely, enveloped in and visible through mist which has the curious double effect of promoting the general colour harmony, while aiding the colour to maintain its impersonality, its moral and æsthetic detachment from the objects on which it rests. There is nothing human in the colour of London ; its spirituality is of itself ; that is why it means nothing, or is invisible, to the vast majority of





THE WEDDING-PARTY AT THE CASCADE IN THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE

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the inhabitants. "How gloomy!" says the "man in the street," pointing to an unimaginable harmony of purples and browns and greens and greys materialized like a spirit in an envelope of mist, and playing, unconscious of its human surroundings, in a slum. In Paris, on the contrary, the colour is Parisian, with a Parisian appeal to the Parisian heart and brain, and it tells endless and charming little stories about Paris.

From the artist's point of view this may constitute an inferiority, but who shall deny the documentary value or the abiding charm? To separate the life and movement, the human inspiration, of the Paris streets from their colour is not possible. On a fine morning, what freshness, what brilliance, what delicacy of colour—blue and pearl grey always predominating—a reflection of the Parisian spirit in its gaiety, its keen wit, its cheerful love of labour, its social and moral thrift, its sense of æsthetic restraint! No too garish poster, hardly an ill-drawn one, offends the eye. The very crowds, as Rodin once remarked on the evidence of instantaneous photographs, hold themselves by some mysterious and collective sense of harmony in groups that are perfect as to balance of proportion and composition of line.

These soft but outspoken greys, and these blues, whose hearts verily leap, are brightened in the spring by the pure greens of the numerous boulevards and avenues, which in autumn are a blaze of gold and copper. But when the trees are bare and black in winter, the greys still shimmer in peaceful contentment beneath the encouraging caress of the blue. The Parisian season is then at its height. In the tall stone houses the fireplaces are burning more wood than coal, so there is no black smoke. The blue-grey shadows which these houses throw across the streets when the sun shines, as it generally does, are so luminous and soft as hardly to be distinguishable from those of summer. Paris looks for the time being a little more clothed. Always statuesque, there is now more about her of the pretty *mannequin* than of the Venus of Milo. But this is merely a nuance, a note. It suffices to give you an idea of what is going on in the changed season, which, however, as a season, lives the same life, and remains of the same colour and aspect, year after year. But it is at night that the anecdotic quality of the colour of Paris most reveals itself. The streets are aflame with myriads of multicoloured lights, each of which has its peculiar Parisian suggestion to convey. At the same time the

general colour effect is extremely rich and variegated. Paris at night is as bejewelled as an Oriental Princess; but here, again, London surely has the advantage of her, in variety and beauty of colour. After the complete nightfall, London lights have none of the harmonious arrangement and sapphire-blue setting of those of Paris, and their suggestion is incomparably more mean and vile; but Paris is rarely visited by those fantastic mist forms, eerie fog giants, which people the London parks after sunset, and Paris has, comparatively speaking, little twilight. Where in Paris could one see such an evening as when the November sun sets upon the gasometers on the marshy promontory at Deptford Creek, and above the purple and green mists their glowing outlines hang low in the sky like a burning grille? Remember, too, what worlds of distinctive colour lie between two such æsthetic poles as are represented by this vision seen from the East End docks, and the view from Richmond Hill, which may be considered as the extreme western point of London.

When Paris is fog-bound, which happens about twice a year, the Parisians look upon the phenomenon in the light of a huge practical joke. They feel just as they did when the electricians struck work, and all the lamps went out in the

streets and cafés. Paris is then behaving like a naughty child, and must be good-humouredly scolded or chaffed into promising not to do it again. And her love of brightness and clearness is so intense that these moments of sulkiness never recur often enough to spoil the Parisian temper.

When it rains in Paris, the effect is no greater than that of a child's burst of tears. The aspect of Paris is for a brief space hideous as is that of the child ; but the fit is soon over and the tears are dried, and smiles and gay equanimity return. The persistent weeping of the London streets has the quality and the high seriousness of the gloomiest Scandinavian tragedy. London weeps as one imagines Mrs. Siddons to have wept for fifty consecutive performances in the rôle of " the Mourning Bride," *en grande artiste*, making a presentment of utter woe which has the abiding dignity, the harmonious atmosphere, and the colour ragoût, of a great painting.

The famous floods in Paris two years ago, and the rainy weather that accompanied them, were so exceptional as to be without precedent in the memory of man. They gave the impression of a sudden and violent attack of yellow fever upon a patient of surpassing vigour and beauty who had never been accustomed to

illness, and whose quick collapse caused a panic-like feeling of alarm to her friends. People watched the Seine from its banks with horror written on their faces, as if they were at the bedside of a sick goddess. Its delicate complexion changed to muddy yellow ; its breast heaving, sightlessly and unconsciously it pursued the wild phantoms of delirium, with madness coursing in its veins. Every hour an official gauge was taken, which, like the temperature noted down by a doctor, marked the advancing stages of the Seine's malady. Then, just when the worst was beginning to be feared, a slight reduction in this gauge-temperature brought to all sympathizers a feeling of relief. The crisis was past, convalescence had set in ; the Seine was as beautiful and brilliant as ever.

## CHAPTER IV

### ALL PARIS

“ALL PARIS” is Hydra-headed—impossible of definition in a phrase. All London, All New York, differ from All Paris, not only by race and language, but by the social elements composing them. Your concierge, or house-porter, supposing that you reside in Paris, might belong to All Paris, while you, his legal master, might not.

Take Edmond, for instance, the famous *huissier d'annonce*. Firstly, he is EDMOND—*Edmond tout court*, superior, that is to say, to the convention of a surname, as are princes and prelates (he has much of the magnificence of both). At half the social functions of Paris, it is Edmond who shouts out the visitors' names.

Edmond is tall and robust, white-haired, and of a sanguine complexion. Round his shoulders he wears an idealized bicycle chain of solid silver, which is his chain of office, while his black knee-breeches and black silk stockings



and silver-buckled shoes are a costume of ceremony which would be libelled were they called a livery. For fifty years Edmond's life has mainly resolved itself into one long fantastic vision of all the most illustrious men and beautiful women in the world passing in endless procession before him.

Should you be a foreigner in Paris, and a new-comer, and should you be invited to some great Parisian reception, stand well within reach of Edmond's stentorian voice, and you will learn more as to the composition of All Paris than any of the society papers or directories of fashion could teach you. Edmond's countenance alone is a book — a Red Book, the Londoner might say. His every movement has hierarchical meaning. He is contemporary history in pantomime, but a pantomime as finely nuanced as it is discreet. He knows everything, because he knows everybody, and with a gesture, a glance, which no photograph could register, though perceptible, a change of tone pregnant with significance, but inimitable, he has said it.

The recording angel must have at least Edmond's omniscience, and most of his impartiality. Politics, religion, art, literature, science, music, and the drama, have no secrets

from him. Revolutions affect him not ; Governments succeed one another with dazzling rapidity—he does not care. “ His Excellency



MONSIEUR LE CONCIERGE.

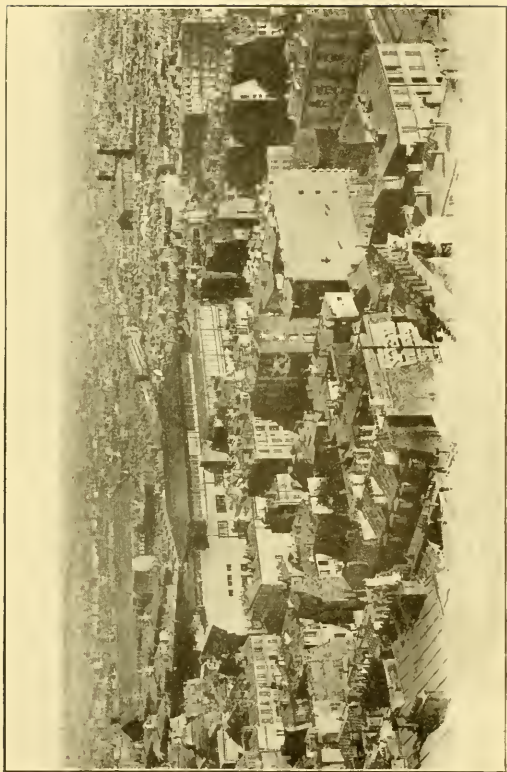
the Ambassador of Muscovy and Madame la Princesse de Strumpfelstiltzkine !” he announces, with a roar in which there is a hint of joyous

patriotism, a suppressed National Anthem, as the popular representative of the "allied nation" enters the blazing room, beaming with affability, his niece, that grandest of *grandes dames*, upon his arm. "Monsieur le Président du Conseil et Madame et Mesdemoiselles Potdevin!" Edmond's voice has become official and stern. Traditionally, and on principle, All Paris is against the Government; but the Prime Minister, whether Radical or Socialist, stands for France, and Edmond takes care that you shall feel it. This does not prevent him from proclaiming with a bravura, which a restraining reverence just prevents from being theatrical, the great historical names of the French aristocracy, among whom he has many patrons — "Monsieur le Marquis et Madame la Marquise Duguesclin-Carabas, Monsieur le Baron de Fontenoy-Cantal-Roquefort!" And what a delicate promise of fun in his voice when he announces "Monsieur Galipaux!" the comic actor, who is shortly to recite a monologue, and how unctuous and benedictory he used to be at the approach of the Papal Nuncio—that was before the Church was disestablished—and with what proud confidence he flourishes into the room a popular General! Nor does he fail to give due dis-

inction to the illustrious representatives of art and science, the academician, the professor of the faculty, the surgeon *à la mode*, the latest inventor. Each in his several way is welcomed and warmed by the approving recognition of Edmond. But whose is this unfamiliar figure, who is this not exactly shy, somewhat awkward, plain-visaged, but intellectual-looking person without uniform or decoration? Edmond's face has become a stone wall. He bends his bewhiskered head to catch the name. Mr. Brown. "Monsieur Boum!" roars Edward without the smallest hesitation. Mr. Brown is a man of many parts, and was a personal friend of the late King of the Belgians, but he does not belong to All Paris—at least, not yet.

Now, somewhere or other in Paris, Edmond is a house-porter

All Paris, and this, perhaps, is its most distinguishing trait, is both exclusive and eclectic. It reflects the national as well as the Parisian spirit. It is a microcosm of France, and therefore of the civilized world; for France is in the van of civilization, notwithstanding many a wayward impulse, many a false step; and Paris, in spite of limitations and defects, is still the Ville Lumière, a Beacon to Humanity, the Capital of Progress. All Paris is exclusive



THE PANORAMA OF PARIS FROM MONTMARTRE

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because it is an aristocracy—an aristocracy in the true sense of the term, not of birth, but of achievement. It is eclectic, because human achievement knows no bounds, but is daily widening its horizons, lengthening its perspectives, heightening its skies; but, though exclusive, All Paris is, not a charmed circle, a temple of mysteries to which a shibboleth is the only open - sesame, a club with committee and rules of admission, a social University setting examinations and granting degrees; it is as elastic as the morals of its weakest member, and pliable as a cable with unfixed ends girdling the earth. One may be above it or below it; one has to fulfil certain conditions to be of it.

To enumerate these conditions in detail would require a volume by itself. Generally speaking, it may be said that neither birth nor wealth is sufficient alone to procure admission to All Paris, nor is any one of the usually recognized social disabilities, such as excessive moral or physical ugliness, extreme poverty or low origin, a necessary cause of exclusion. All Paris has its prejudices, but they are not those of society. Thus, the Duke who is of All Paris—and there are respectable authentic Dukes of whom this cannot be said—accepts the fellowship in All Paris of the dressmaker, the jeweller,

the advocate, the actor, the actress, the artist, the politician, the financier, the literary man, the shady man, the shady woman, the international adventurer, the baker, the candlestick-maker, and the thief, whom he would not introduce into his private circle or his home, with whom he may never be on speaking terms, but who figure in the same All Paris as himself, who are therefore, whether he likes to admit it or not, of the same brand and kidney. For this and other reasons All Paris cannot be compared with either the four hundred of New York or the smart set of London. It is superior and inferior to both. Its exclusiveness is of another kind. All Paris draws its vital juices from every stratum of the city's population, yet it absorbs only that which is congenial to it, rejecting every element of nutrition which is not first-class, of a particular quality. No one can impose himself on All Paris, whose taste is as capricious and as delicate as that of a woman of fashion at the close of a season; but certain claims take precedence of others, are unequivocal, *a priori*, do not, in the natural order of things, give rise to opposition. Royal Princes—on condition that they are not Bourbons or Bonapartes, with pretensions to the throne—Ambassadors, Cabinet Ministers, Academicians,



have, so to speak, the *grand entrée* to All Paris, a stall reserved for them at all first performances, a legitimate place in the pageant. They may scorn to take advantage of their opportunities, in which case Paris will not run after them. To this spirit of independence, coupled with a loose comprehensiveness which includes Bohemianism and cosmopolitanism, All Paris owes much of its individual force, its vitality, the breadth and continuity of its influence, its charm and its colour. All Paris is a flower—the supreme efflorescence of French life. As with the flowers of our fields and gardens, it is preoccupied in an eminent degree with the perpetuation of its species, and All Paris, which, to continue the floral simile, belongs to the order of Compositæ, and has a hundred *fleurons* to its crown, would die of inanition if its roots were not firmly planted in Seine mud.

Like the flower, moreover, it has the sense of pose. Its appeal is decorative and sensual. There is no place in All Paris for those who decline the satisfaction of publicity and advertisement, who spurn popular applause. For this reason certain master-minds that have shed glory upon the nation, certain august personages who, by their pre-eminent social position and family traditions, stand for all that is most

memorable in the history of France, have never been of All Paris. They have been above it. The First Empire was of the whole world, or very nearly ; the Second Empire was essentially that of All Paris. Therein lay some of the difference between Napoleon the Great and Napoleon the Little.

It is in the essence of All Paris to be spectacular ; for this reason the theatre is the hub, the magnetic centre, of All Paris—its subconsciousness, its *alter ego*, the glass in which it dresses itself. At a dinner given recently in Paris by James Hazen Hyde, Sardou expressed the belief that All Paris could be mustered within the walls of a theatre. Hébrard, the *Temps* editor, thought that the audience at an important dress rehearsal expressed All Paris better, perhaps, than any other Paris agglomeration. It included those who form part of All Paris by predestined right, the All Paris of social position, and those whom All Paris had captured or promoted or adopted ; those born into All Paris ; those who had had All Paris thrust upon them, and others who had conquered All Paris by courage, assiduity, and address.

The loadstone of Paris is its Parisianism. It is this which attracts thousands of English and



THE "GRAND SEIZE" IN THE CAFÉ ANGLAIS



American women yearly to the Rue de la Paix, which supplies the inimitable *chic* and *cachet* to the Parisian gown and the manner of wearing it. Parisianism is an intellectual grace as well, and not far removed from a moral quality. It sparkles in the wit which has given the French playwright the sceptre of the European stage from Molière to Meilhac; it shines in the logic and clearness and amenity of style which make French writers unrivalled in the art of lively narration; it is in the sauces of the French chef; it is in the gaiety and *bonhomie* and broad philosophy of life which every true Parisian professes and practises; it is visible in the characteristic note of French art, which is facility combined with strength.

*Parisine*, the essence of Parisianism, does not bear transplantation. The dressmaker, the cook, those two standard-bearers of Parisianism, heraldic supporters of its escutcheon, promptly lose their *tour de main*, the cunning of their hand, if they settle in a foreign land. They are fish out of water. The myriad influences of their Parisian environment are missing, and they starve for the lack of the mental and moral food upon which they have been reared. This has been the experience of all their English and American patrons. During the five years

that Henri Rochefort spent in exile in London, so fearful was he of losing or diminishing the Parisianism of his style by any contact with the English language, that the only English word he would allow himself to use was the monosyllable "home," which he would fling to his English coachman when returning there.

All Paris is a constellation with its fixed suns, its revolving planets, its comets, and its shooting-stars. Whistler was one of the typical shooting-stars of All Paris; Wilbur Wright was another. For the residential foreigner to belong to All Paris, it is essential, however, that he should be in no way connected, except in an official capacity, with his own colony. All Paris opens its arms to cosmopolitanism, but colonialism, even more than provincialism, is anathema. For Paris is a jealous mistress, and eyes with displeasure any patriotism other than her own. But the foreigner may console himself with the reflection that in no other capital in the world does the *metèque* so quickly acquire "right of city." The *metèque*, it must be explained—a designation derived from the ancient Greek word applied to foreigners in Athens—differs from the *rastaquouère* by reason of his irreproachable respectability. All Paris has room for both, but the undesirable and often

dangerous *vastaquouère* has been gradually yielding his place to the mild and methodical *metèque*. In every domain of All Paris the foreigner, and particularly the American, is to be found ; in the All Paris of Finance, which governs in a large measure the All Paris of Politics, he is specially influential. Nor is he absent from the All Paris of Letters, as witness the two American poets, Stuart Merrill and Viélé-Griffin ; while in the All Paris of Art his name is legion. In the All Paris of Delight and the All Paris of Desolation the foreigner likewise abounds.

All Paris has its virtues and its vices, its religions and its scepticisms, its tragedies and its comedies, its great and little sides ; but with its priests and its profligates, its poets and its Philistines, its delegates from every school of thought and sphere of action and realm of dream, its admission of them is not a submission to them. In spite of its numerous divisions, the countless facets to its surface, All Paris is a composite, corporate whole—a Moral Being.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ODOURS OF PARIS

CAPITAL cities have a different and distinctive odour from that of provincial towns. Obviously, the atmosphere of capitals is the more complex, but is this a sufficient explanation? Is it too much to say that all provincial towns smell alike? There may be local peculiarities of a secondary kind; Marseilles has African and Mediterranean exhalations which are lacking to Chartres, but both have the *provincial smell*, that special mustiness which is inseparable from what the Germans call *Kleinstaedtigkeit*. One faculty of this provincial odour is to deprive the objects it envelops of the highest quality otherwise proper to them. A picture, however great a masterpiece it may be, never produces its best impression in the odour of a provincial museum. The noblest architecture loses in dignity by reason of the provincial odour which may hang about it or penetrate it. Is there anything material in the air of provincial towns



by which this odour can be accounted for? I fancy not. It is in the walls and the pavements and the shop-windows; it destroys the bouquet of a good cigar; it is fatal to the aroma of coffee and tea; it lessens any of the attractions which may reasonably be attributable to the smell of prime meat and fresh vegetables; it is that which makes residence in the provinces impossible to most of us, which positively drives us back to the cities, even when our health really demands rest and fresh air. Defying analysis, who shall name it? In all probability it is the Odour of Ennui, for, admitting that Sanctity has an odour (as is certainly the case), why not Dulness also?

Thus, the Odour of Urbanity, which is that of every capital city, worthy to be so called, is recognizable by the absence from its composition of any traces of the Provincial Odour, from which the Suburban Odour is, moreover, quite distinct. Speaking in a general way, the odours of Paris are urban in even a higher degree than those of London, Berlin, or the other capitals of Europe. To enumerate them all would be difficult, but it is possible to give a briefly-sketched-in account of what may be termed the principal "odour-scheme."

On arriving in Paris, you notice at once an

odour of frying ; not such an odour as assails the shrinking nostrils in the East End of London, which comes from the cheap fried-fish shops that abound there, but of delicate frying of good, palatable food in fresh butter. Then you remember that Paris is the culinary centre of the modern world, a gastronomic sun whose beneficent rays help to keep civilization alive.

This odour of frying, or *friture*, pervades the entire city, but its quality is not everywhere the same. In the so-called "populous" districts, on the outskirts of the fortifications of Paris, it degenerates into the inferior *odeur de graillon*, a smell of burning grease, which issues from the wayside *gargotes*, or suburban eating-booths, in great gusts, borne along on clouds of grey smoke, saturated with carbonized hog's grease ; for here at every footstep something is being fried in the open air which is both common and unclean. Alphonse Daudet has vividly described in *Les Rois en Exil* these *fritureries en plein vent*—"open-air frying-shops, surrounded by an acrid smell of burnt dripping, with great flames rising rose-coloured in the daylight, around which are actively engaged cooks, dressed in white, behind piles of sugared fritters." And his little exiled hero-Prince rejoices "in the noise and the odour of the fair."

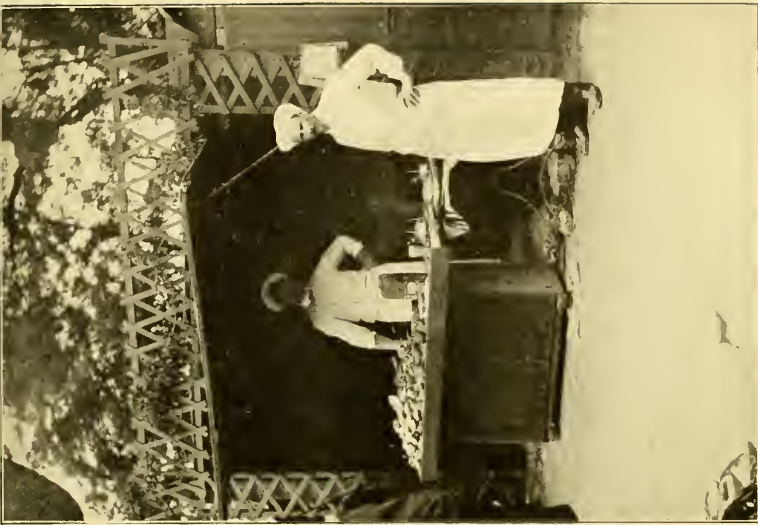
But the royal mother faints into the arms of her son's tutor. Her emotion was excusable, for there are few things more repelling to a sensitive, let alone royal, nose than this *odeur de graillon*, this frizzle of democratic batter. It smells of the people, and they of it; it sounds a savage but ironical blast of independence and vitality, which is at once carnivalesque and defiant like poverty. Of the vast dust-heaps which loom large in the landscapes of these shabby districts, it might be, and very likely is, the quintessence. The rickety summer-houses, and seesaws, and bowling-alleys, in their faded and blistered green or wine red, everything within range of sight or touch, reek of it, or are greasy with its clinging emanations. It hangs on the surface of the neighbouring Seine, associated, at least by suggestion, with the great patches of iridescent fat which dapple the river. No other city in the world evolves just this particular odour, which might be called the Revolutionary Odour, from its suburban slums.

But in the wealthier, central parts of Paris how suave is the odour of frying, and, above all, how truly French, how Parisian! It is the Epicurean Odour. Other cities may, if they please, take precautions to suppress the smell of

cooking altogether, treating it as a public nuisance, and by means of flues and ventilators prevent it escaping into the house or the street. Theirs is simply a less noble heritage of culinary art. In France the smell of good cooking is bound up with her living and historic glories. Artistic ideals, zealously striven after, and never abandoned, are revealed in this delicious odour of frying. The learned in such matters may object that the more penetrating smell of onions (Parisian also), rising from the popular ragout, or stew, bears with it a more humane and consolatory message, especially to those who are passing through an acute moral or mental crisis, yet no one will contend that it makes the same æsthetic appeal or has an equal national significance. There is but one other Parisian odour which can be said to rival that of *friture* in the same sphere. Less piquant and more enveloping, the odour of the *pot-au-feu* rises rapturously at all times from the palaces of the rich and the cottages of the poor, from the basements of the most aristocratic restaurants and the humblest eating-houses, or *bouillons*, as the latter are called, *bouillon* being the soup made in the *pot-au-feu*. Readers of Gustave Geoffroy's story *L'Apprentie* will remember that touching passage describing



THE FRIED-FISH AND MUSSEL BOOTH

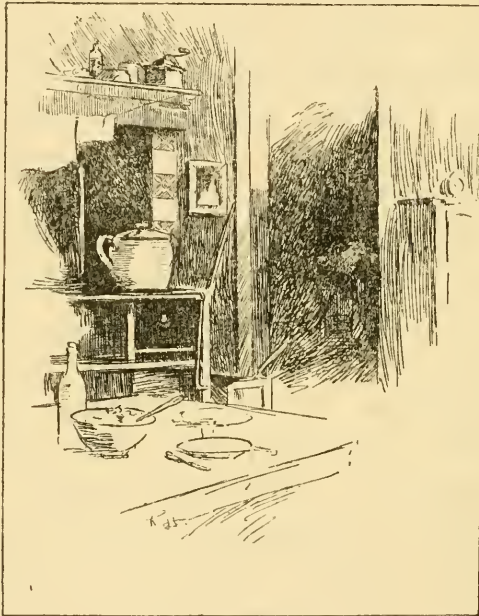


APPLE FRITTERS ON THE FORTIFICATIONS



the return of the erring daughter Céline to the little tenement at Belleville, in the northern workmen's quarter of Paris, where the widowed mother and the loving young sister are waiting, ready to welcome and forgive: "Toutes trois s'attablèrent autour du pot-au-feu qui embaumait la chambre" (All three women sat down to the table from which the *pot-au-feu* was spreading a balmy perfume throughout the room). In truth, there is more than carrots and leeks and lump of beef or aged hen in the *pot-au-feu*; there is a large slice of the heart of France. What visions does not its fragrance call up to every Frenchman's memory—of the sparing mother catering for all; of the clever little housekeeper of a wife; of that strenuous, tender, sober, merry life which is the home-life of the majority of the French people! This might, without exaggeration, be called the Odour of Domestic Felicity. A scene arises in my mind, so poignant in its tragic simplicity, that every detail is still vivid, though it happened years ago. Stretched upon her bed, carefully dressed in her best clothes, peaceful, and of unaltered beauty, as if sleeping, lies a young woman, dead: she has poisoned herself. "What neatness! what order!" exclaims the concierge's wife, who has begged me to accompany her

into the room. The little flat is bright and clean as a new pin ; not a speck of dust upon the well - polished sideboard ; the furniture simple and cosy, without vulgarity or ostentation of superior taste ; in the *armoire à glace*,



IN ITS BIG RED RECEPTACLE, OH, MOST PITIFUL ! STANDS THE *POT-AU-FEU*.

that wardrobe with mirrored doors which is the pride of every small Parisian housekeeper, a quantity of spotless linen beautifully packed away, with a modest sum of money, sufficient for the funeral expenses, tucked in between the



piles of sheets and napkins. All alone the dead girl lies, without a known friend or relation in the world. Even her name is a mystery ; but from a torn newspaper lying on the floor we gather that someone who must have been very dear, for whom she had been waiting on that fatal day, had not come, and could never come again. He, who had been, as in the Scotch ballad, "all the world" to her, had met with a fatal accident, had suddenly and tragically vanished from her life forever. And in the tiny kitchen, two yards long by a yard wide, with the burnished copper saucepans hanging on the wall in precise order of size, the white enamelled spice-boxes on the shelves, and the clean plates and glasses shining as only loving hands can make them shine, on the polished brass-fitted stove, in its big red earthenware receptacle, oh, most pitiful ! stands the *pot-au-feu*, no longer fragrant, but, like the poor body, cold, the surface of the *bouillon* covered with a thin crust of congealed grease, as if Death had touched it, too, with an icy finger !

、 The Odour of Majesty envelops the courtly faubourgs of St. Germain and St. Honoré, the Place des Vosges (which some old-fashioned people persist in calling the Place Royale), portions of the Louvre, and, particularly, all

that district which extends from the Palace of the Luxembourg to the Vendôme Column, taking in the Élysée Palace, which is the French "White House," the Tuileries Gardens, and the chief Embassies. It is a rich and velvety odour (though the velvet sometimes degenerates into plush). Green and gold—a faded apple green on shot silk or morocco, and the tarnished gold of the decorative gilding on the ironwork of the old Imperial Palace gates—are among its colour parallels, for all odours have their colour parallels and their sound parallels, too. In spite of the republican institutions which now prevail, the Odour of Majesty is still more noticeable in Paris than in any other European capital. No doubt the explanation is that Paris centralized the monarchical authority in Europe in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and commencement of the nineteenth centuries, during the reigns of Louis XIV. and Napoleon the Great, as no other city has done since the days of Imperial Rome. There is a pronounced Odour of Aristocracy in some of the great houses in England, which may still be discovered even in mutilated London; but it is by no means the same as the Odour of Majesty, which is at once more penetrating, impersonal, and imposing. The wide stone courtyards of the Louvre are

haunted by the Odour of Majesty as by a ghost. It enfolds Skeleton Versailles, with its mouldering parks, like a shroud. At Fontainebleau its spectral vibrations send a constant shiver through the atmosphere and down your back.

There is something peculiar in the air of Paris which keeps old things sweet. There is an Old - World Odour in Paris such as is to be found nowhere else, which has much of the musky perfume of old gold. (It is commonly observed that Gold has the power of retaining scents.) It is an odour permeated by souvenirs, mostly of Courts. It suggests the slumbering aroma of faded rose-leaves in a pot-pourri, and is as complex as the scent of a wardrobe which has contained the silks and satins, the fans and feathers and furbelows, of many generations back, or of an old bonbonnière whose sweetmeats, though almost fossilized, make much the same seductive appeal as do the *beaux-vestes*, the lingering charms of some sugared dowager who has been a toast in the early fifties. Old book-shops, bric-à-brac shops, and even old clothes shops, have in Paris an agreeable muskiness which distinguishes them from those in London and some other European cities, where the mouldiness and decay, or merely the dilapidation and neglect, into which antique merchandise

is generally allowed to fall, are signalized by a combination of sickly odours of a most melancholy and depressing effect. It would seem that the minute and cherishing care bestowed upon their wares by the Paris antiquity-dealers accounts for the dignified, museum-like perfume which gives quality alike to themselves and their goods, for which they are thus emboldened to demand much higher prices than they could otherwise. One likes to think that the ancient objects themselves are conscious of this affection displayed toward them, and that their delicate and complex odours, harmonizing with their surroundings, are an expression of their gratitude and contentment in at least as full a measure as is the scent of a rose a love poem. To deny these subtle interchanges altogether would be to reject the evidence of one's senses. Any book-lover familiar with both cities will acknowledge that in Paris the books on the quays are always warmer to the touch than their less honoured brethren, ruthlessly heaped one on top of the other in the so-called "rummage-boxes" of the second-hand booksellers in London. Their personality has been respected. The dust of dead newspapers, of defunct proclamations, of forgotten political programmes and shattered political idols, emits a charac-

teristic odour, peculiar to that part of Paris in the neighbourhood of the Rue du Croissant, which for generations has been the home of the popular press. It is suggestive of democracy. Tobacco, garlic, and beer, enter largely into its composition ; but, above all, the atmosphere of this busy and, at night, blazing neighbourhood is redolent of printers' ink and of damp paper—of oceans of cheap ink and of tons of cheap paper. It is the Odour of Free-thought, or, in any case, of Free Expression.

Naturally enough, the Parliamentary Odour is particularly strong in the lobbies of the Chamber of Deputies ; it is acrid and uninspiring, without, I regret to say, any kind of dignity. There is something in it of the disquieting stuffiness typical of a French notary's office, and of the bumptious insipidity peculiar to the inside of Ministerial buildings. A sulphurous fogginess is never wholly absent from these melancholy stone - flagged courts and corridors, the largest of which is aptly named the Salle des Pas - Perdus, the Hall of the Wasted Footsteps, forming the antechamber to the Salle des Phrases-Perdues, or Hall of Wasted Words. For the French Chamber is a temple of eloquence, and its lobby, where the deputies receive their electors, the sacrificial

chamber attached to the temple, in which die, sooner or later, the hopes and ambitions of those who put their trust in words. The whole place reeks of stale rhetoric, moribund convictions, and corrupted souls. The Senate, on the contrary, which is housed in the restored portion of the ancient palace of Marie de Médicis, now called the Palais du Luxembourg, may boast of a predominating odour which only slightly differs from that of the neighbouring Institute; for it is in the main academic, it has the professorial snuffiness which we shall find again at the Sorbonne and in the lecture-halls of the various University faculties. The Senate belongs by its odour, not less than by its situation, to the Latin Quarter. This is particularly true to-day; for, though there are surviving vestiges in its mural paintings and upholstery of former royal and imperial splendour, the Senate has the frigid solemnity of an assembly of sages, of Conscript Fathers, but none of the theatrical magnificence which distinguished it when it was a House of Peers. Its debates are as tranquil and uneventful as those of a scientific congress. The Academic and the Ecclesiastical Odours are distinct but similar. The Odour of Sanctity, which differs entirely from both, has the same vibrations, on the

sound parallel, as of bell-ringing, quiet prayer, and psalmody, and, on the colour parallel, of old stone and of ancient painted glass. Nowhere is the Odour of Sanctity more concentrated than in the ancient Gothic churches of Paris. Not even in Rouen is it so pure and undefiled, for there the Provincial Odour interferes. It is the very breath of Notre Dame, of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, of St. Germain-des-Prés, of St. Gervais, of St. Séverin, of St. Étienne-du-Mont. But in the churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as St. Sulpice, Notre Dame des Blancs-Manteaux, the Madeleine, and St. Augustin, where Jesuitical and congregational influences are noticeable, it yields to an inferior Ecclesiastical Odour, which, if it were not for occasional whiffs of incense, would be indistinguishable from the Academic Odour of the republican and, in a general way, anticlerical University of Paris. The rich, warm, mellow, medieval odours which contribute so much to the unique charm of Oxford and Cambridge, and which, though of dim monastic origin, are to-day Academic Odours, if ever there were any, are absent from the buildings of the University of Paris, in spite of its being the oldest scholastic foundation in Europe. The Sorbonne, with the exception of

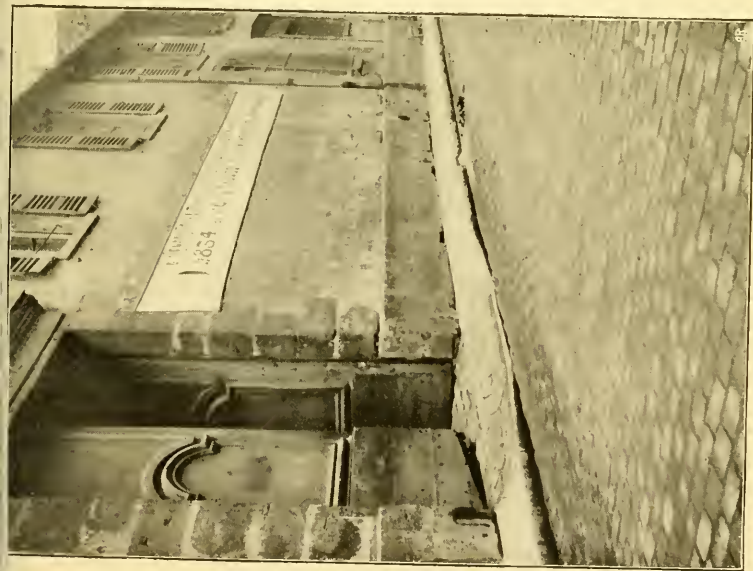
its seventeenth-century chapel, has the same odour of new stone, of fresh paint, unseasoned wood, and yesterday's varnish, as the modern portions of the *École de Droit* and the *École de Médecine*. An Academic Odour is there, but it is somewhat harsh, with a note of cold formality. The bumptious insipidity, already referred to as typifying the odour of Government offices in France, is not altogether foreign to it, a circumstance readily explained by the fact that, the University of Paris being subject to the Minister of Public Instruction, its Professors are State officials. The human element—the *Alma Mater*—is entirely absent, if exception be made of a strong redolence of femininity, of the scents of smart society traceable to the large number of charming *Parisiennes* who frequent the lecture-halls of the *Literary Faculty*, investing their approaches with the same provocative perfumes as the foyer of the *Comédie Française* on the afternoon of a dress rehearsal. This lack of humanity is what repels in the predominating odour of those eighteenth-century churches in Paris which were, and still are, the centres of dogmatic teaching. Built after the Reformation, their atmosphere has been one of theological disputation rather than of the pure ethical



evangelism which spread the warm wings of faith over the huddling multitudes in earlier ages, when there were fewer heretics to denounce. In the Ecclesiastical Odours, solemn and sedate, which have come down to us from the later times, when Mother Church had become Master Church, there are vibrations which, as they strike upon our olfactory nerves, raise up memories of Inquisitional cruelty, of a stern semi-military discipline, of ruthless dogmatic feuds.

Balzac, in *Le Père Goriot*, has described the *Odeur de Pension* (the Boarding-house Odour), "which strikes cold, is damp to the nose, and suggests mouldiness and rancidness." It "explained and implied the entire person" of the proprietress of the *Maison Vauquer*. It still dominates the atmosphere of all those retired and essentially middle-class streets (Paris, being a fortified city, has no suburbs in the English sense), which spread out like the spokes of a cart-wheel from the cosmopolitan hub. This is the Odour of Middle-class Paris, the real Paris of the Parisians, of which the mere passer-through knows little, though to the foreign resident it soon becomes familiar enough, "for it is here that old age peters out and joyous youth is forced to work, for there is in every one

of such streets a boarding-house and a school." Built of stone, on freehold land, Paris changes very slowly. The atmosphere of the middle-class Paris of to-day is at least half a century old ; it belongs to the period of Louis Philippe, and has the same bourgeois qualities and defects for which that reign was noted—a low standard of artistic ideals, an easy-going contentment with the *à peu-près*, or half-achievement. A gradual improvement is, however, taking place ; the odours of the middle-class streets are losing some of the depressing stuffiness, the *renfermé*, to use the French expression, which " explained and implied " the routine-shaped lives of their inhabitants three generations ago. At the end of the eighteenth century the odours of Paris were like those of Peking to-day. The chief lesson of history is that the trend of human life is constantly towards higher things.



THE ENTRANCE TO MADAME VAUQUER'S PENSION  
(*Le Père Goriot.*—BALZAC)



THE COURTYARD OF THE PENSION VAUQUER  
(*Le Père Goriot.*—BALZAC)



## CHAPTER VI

### ON THE DECAY OF FRENCH MANNERS

ACCORDING to the late Mr. F. Trollope (a brother of the novelist, who was familiar with the Continental society of half a century ago), the last Frenchman to retain, in the perfection of its traditions, *la grande manière* was Chateaubriand, the author, be it borne in mind, of *Le Génie du Christianisme*. That this complex personage, who had shown himself in so many respects an innovator, and even, politically speaking, an iconoclast, should have displayed an unswerving loyalty to forms which to a modern mind might seem to matter as little as, or less than, any others, is attributable, doubtless, to his romanticism. An ineradicable pride of race was one of the most significant elements in the romanticism of this great writer, the founder, indeed, of the Romantic School, the literary father of Victor Hugo ; on it was based his passion for politeness, and out of this in turn grew in a great measure

his admiration for Christianity and his attitude of veneration towards the Catholic Church, which he upheld and defended, and whose tenets he accepted in a spirit of chivalry which was the very essence of good breeding. Chateaubriand would have condemned the conduct of the French Government of to-day towards the Catholic Church as, above all things, ungentlemanly, and therein it might have been difficult to gainsay him. Good manners are impossible without sincere religion in one form or another, and the converse is also true. The decay of French manners—which is, alas! a real thing—has been contemporary with the gradual disappearance or decline of most of the finer artistic instincts by which the life of the French people was formerly inspired.

\This is a world-wide disaster. Be it understood, however, that it is not sought here to establish invidious comparisons. It is not contended that, while French manners have deteriorated, English manners have improved; but France has hitherto been the fount of politeness, from whose sparkling sources the rest of the civilized world has drawn its supply. That this fount should be running dry is as terrible a catastrophe as was the decay of Greek art, with the oblivion which overtook its principles

and teachings. In a few years it is more than likely that Europe will no longer possess any but defunct models of *savoir-vivre*, dilapidated antiques without arms or legs.

\Politeness, to which the French nation has given so subtle and suave a countenance, probably originated in a sense of fear. To study fear in its highest expression we must go to the insect world. No living thing will make way for you with greater conviction or *empressement* than the common insect of our fields and roads, which through countless æons of fear has gradually acquired an elaborate coat of armour, a number of eyes in its back, a habit of only going out at night, and a thousand legs to run away with. Such a creature is wonderfully adapted by Nature for the cheaper courtesies of life. It could hardly ever make a *gaffe*. In pre-Raphaelite countries, such as Germany and in certain States of America, politeness is, though barbaric, of a more ceremonious description than among better-bred and better-fed people. A more or less vague feeling of apprehension governs it; and even in France to-day the cheerful "good-morning" which the French peasant as a rule gives you is often distinctly reassuring when you meet him at some lonely corner of a wood. The practice of

handshaking is traced by certain authorities to a desire common to the parties concerned to show that neither is carrying a weapon. But these origins are of small import. The art of politeness, invented and brought to its apogee of completeness by the French, belongs to quite a different sphere of ideas. Politeness, instead of being a homage to the strong, had developed from the days of chivalry, when its chief mission was to protect the weak, into a perfect compendium of the art of living based upon unrestrained generosity both of thought and action. Perfect politeness is perfect liberality. A liberal education, the liberal arts, are identical with a polite education, the polite arts! And any decay in national politeness cannot fail to react to a most alarming degree upon the intellect and character of the civilized world at large. Brief reflection aided by the most superficial examination of the main facts in the history of man's development will amply suffice to show that literary and artistic decadence has ever been accompanied by a dulling of the instinct of liberality: the cheap church has taken the place of the cathedral built at an inestimable expense of labour and devotion, and similar mental and moral degeneracy has marked the invasion of the cheap house, the



cheap book, the cheap *objet d'art*, the cheap everything. All truly artistic effort is a labour of love, and love never counts the cost. Art has no price, and makes none. A perfect act of politeness ever involves in one respect or another an act of self-abnegation. There is the famous example of Lord Stair and Louis XIV., when his lordship, being bidden by the King to precede him into one of the royal carriages, immediately complied. The politeness was equal on both sides. The French Sovereign gave proof of unrestrained liberality worthy of so magnanimous a monarch by abandoning his prerogative of precedence in his own dominions to the Scotch Viscount. The English Ambassador returned the compliment by yielding immediate obedience to the behest of a King who was not his master. Neither sacrifice was outdone by the other. In another and even more typical instance the Duc de Richelieu, having called upon the English Ambassador, courteously *forbade* the latter to see him to his carriage. "I shall disobey your orders, Monseigneur," was the Ambassador's reply. "In that case," said the Duc with a smile, "I shall imprison you;" and, slipping through the door, he deftly locked it behind him. But the English Ambassador was equal to the occasion. He

leapt from the second-floor window of his apartment on to the stones below, and, though he broke his leg in so doing, he was bowing at the door when the Duc de Richelieu, delighted to have been so elegantly outwitted, entered his *carosse*. It were wrong to laugh. That was the *grande manière*.

\ The decay of politeness in France may be variously traced to the coarsening and levelling effects of obligatory military service; to the growth of democratic ideas; to the spirit of rapacity, which is masked under the word *égalité*; to the absence of a Court; to political discontent; to financial embarrassment; to many causes, the analysis of which, however, possesses but little interest. That the French are not as polite and, concomitantly, not as cheerful as they were is obvious to even a week-end tripper; for within the memory of man quite the majority of the Parisians, even of the lower middle class, were examples of civilized and pleasant courtesy to their social peers across the Channel. Did not Heinrich Heine say (who, however, was not an altogether reliable judge in such matters) that ladies of the Paris Central Markets talked like Duchesses? To-day the elaborate phraseology of the French colloquial tongue is giving place to slang, to idioms



A MURAL PAINTING BY GAVARNI AT THE ROCHER DE CANCALE

To face page 100



borrowed from English, the idioms which English can best afford to lose, to sporting abbreviations. The very grammar is being slowly but surely uprooted ; and with the stately old language is disappearing the environment which was appropriate to it. The *café où l'on cause* has yielded up its life to the noisy beerhouse. Art and literature are both deeply affected by the decay of manners in France. The vulgar automobile, whose inconsiderate movements are everywhere the epitome of bad manners, is acknowledged to be a chief cause of the poverty which has befallen both artists and men of letters. The devotees of the new sport have neither money to buy pictures nor time to read books.

## CHAPTER VII

### PERSONALLY CONDUCTED

“WANT a guide, sir? Want a guide?” Then various brief, whispered hints as to the multi-coloured seductions of Paris, especially by night. Mr. Bob Smith, the guide, is a tall shabby man with near eyes and red bottle nose, a half-effaced Anglo-Saxon call-back in the watery blue stare and horsey cut of cheek and chin, but a general configuration forced by impecuniosity into a Continental and cosmopolitan mould. He will confide to you, should you ever give him the chance of five minutes’ conversation, that, though he “has come down a bit in the world,” he once had the honour of holding Her Majesty’s commission. In spite of his looks, he is neither dangerous nor dishonest, merely incompetent and alcoholic. His knowledge of French is limited; indeed, he can do little more than conduct his clients from one American bar to another, and purchase their entrance tickets to the Moulin Rouge and similar haunts of dissipa-

tion. His price, which starts at twenty francs, is reducible to two, with a couple of whiskies thrown in to clinch the bargain. Cutting the forlorn figure that he does, his clients are limited to the circle of Anglo-Saxons newly arrived from London or New York who are hopelessly "abroad" morally and mentally, speechless in every sense, tongue-tied by total ignorance of the native lingo, and the absorption of innumerable cocktails to drive away despair. Let them beware of his friend and colleague Andrews, to whom he will seek to introduce them. Andrews is even redder and more blear-eyed than himself, with a bigger nasal development. Andrews's manner, moreover, is more independent than Mr. Bob Smith's; without being intentionally insolent, it is aggressively condescending, for Andrews has a wife who supports him, so he can afford to put on airs. A black eye—for his wife also beats him—will occasionally detract from the aristocratic impression; but Andrews has some claim to swagger, his father having carried the Diplomatic Valise as a Queen's Messenger, while his grandfather was a British Admiral—facts, however, which do not hinder him, when times are very bad, or his wife has turned him into the street, from hawking British kippers in places where his compatriots foregather. For

Madame Andrews is a *blanchisseuse*, a hard-working Frenchwoman with the biceps of a bargee, quick with a flat-iron, and quicker still of temper and repartee. Wherever Bob Smith takes his Anglo-Saxon customers, Andrews, by a miraculous coincidence, will be found. It is impossible to shake him off. He is constantly saying to Mr. Bob and his friends, "Now it's my turn," but he never really pays for anything, and so shares gratuitously in all their monotonous enjoyments. It is one of the "humours" of French official organization that these two loafers actually pay a tax to the Government of five francs (four shillings) a year for the privilege of being Paris guides. So they are in the strictest sense professionals, and carry about with them an inscribed brass medal to prove it.

In the same professional capacity, on as low, and perhaps even a lower moral level, is that sharp-looking Levantine, with beady brown eyes and thick nose drooping over a protruding blue chin, who speaks all languages with the painful precision, the deliberate inaccuracy, of the polyglot. He drives a harder bargain than Mr. Bob Smith or Mr. Andrews, and, indeed, never for one moment ceases to bargain. You must have seen him before, if you have been about



at all, selling carpets in Bombay; post-cards outside the cafés in Algiers, when he wore a fez; peanuts and sporting tips at Trouville; Greek slippers at Patras; oranges at Constantinople. He, too, specializes in the night attractions of the "gay city." The Anglo-Saxon would be wise not to trust him too far. In that big hotel at whose portals he lurks there are stacks of unclaimed luggage belonging to visitors who apparently went out in the evening to take the air, but who have never returned, whose disappearance is a mystery which even the Morgue has not cleared up. There may be one or two of these mysteries upon which the drooping-nosed Levantine might be able to throw



HE, TOO, SPECIALIZES  
IN THE NIGHT ATTRAC-  
TIONS OF THE "GAY  
CITY."

some light if he would, but there are chances that he will keep his information to himself, and not even communicate it to his friends the police, with whom he passes, nevertheless, for being on confidential terms. Three types of the "rogue" guide, in plain clothes.

Under the wing of the uniformed guide, attached to one of the tourist agencies, you may escape from the dreary round of the sham "gay Paree," with its meretricious amusements invented for the satisfaction of the foreigner, and bearing no relation whatever to the native life of Paris, and visit with profit sights worth seeing; for at least George has a nodding acquaintance with the principal museums and their most notable treasures. He can explain the Obelisk and the Eiffel Tower and the Hôtel des Invalides. His information is often inaccurate, but it has the merit of being brief. It is unnecessary that it should be more accurate or lengthier than it is, for though he speaks plainly (with a German accent) and in a loud voice—the use of the megaphone is, happily, forbidden—his listeners pay him as a rule but scant attention, being, like most English people in unusual surroundings, mainly preoccupied with the feeling that they are being stared at by strangers to whose uncalled-for interest in them

they must display resentment. It is difficult to arouse them from their state of savage self-consciousness, though exception must be made for the one unflinching and untiring questioner, always an Englishman of the bland and blond type, who takes an interest in the guide, treats him with exaggerated attention, remarks in a loud aside to his wife that "he is an extraordinarily well-informed chap," is half inclined to call him "sir," to invite him to dinner, to bid him "look them up" when he comes to London, and all this in honour of the Entente Cordiale (having failed, innocent Britisher, to discover that the guide is a Swiss)—all things which strike confusion and alarm into the breast of the guide, and cause him to muddle his dates. The tourist agency guide takes his customers round the city in bands, and by daytime in huge chars-à-bancs, or, to use the more correct French expression, *tapissières*; of recent date big motor-cars have been introduced. "Voilà les Cooks!" exclaims the Parisian, as he watches the procession passing rapidly along the boulevards. He envies their well-fitting tweed clothes, thinks the cloth caps which they mostly wear, which he calls "jockey" caps, a little disrespectful to the "city of light," disapproves of their briar pipes, and wonders why they look



“ VOILÀ LES COOKS ! ”

so solemn and so sad. Sometimes the wild scheme enters his head to accompany them, and then he is amazed at, and expresses childish pleasure with, all he hears and sees, and next day writes a witty letter to the *Figaro* to explain that, though an old Parisian born and bred, he had never seen Paris, knew nothing of Paris, until he became a "Cook" !

In three rooms on the burning slope of Montmartre there dwells a grey-haired man, with thin features, soft spectacled eyes, a smile which always seems to be fading away, but never does, a chronic cough, and long, delicate, blue-veined hands with red knuckles. Graduate of an ancient University, the passion for research and an instinctive turn for teaching have kept him poor. An American of Irish name and Irish extraction, he is at home anywhere, except perhaps in Ireland, but nowhere so completely at home as in Paris. Paris is the object of his unceasing and unyielding admiration and affection. Paris is his idol, his church. He loves her as a mistress, and obeys her as a slave. He is the passionate shepherd of all the intellectual and artistic glories which make up her blazing train as she steps coquettishly through the days and the nights. Her faults fascinate him equally with her perfections. You must never say a

word against Paris to Mr. O'Shaughnessy, or his eyes will glitter, his fingers will twitch nervously,



PARIS IS HIS IDOL.

a spasm of pain will shadow his lips, and *he will never speak to you again!* He will take it as a personal insult. He loves Paris with the whole and unquailing love which only men who are essentially women's men give to women; the only love which women—or at least French women—really want and are grateful for. Her beauty, whenever he contemplates it—and he is ever contemplating it—intoxicates him, and he adores every atom of her, just as

she is, to the very rouge upon her cheeks and the dye on her hair. She is his one and only love.

For the sake of Paris he has remained a bachelor ; for the sake of Paris he undertakes translations and teaching ; for the sake of Paris he maintains himself on a superb level of indifference to the commercial advantages of any kind of a career. "Oh no, that is too much ; you would disoblige me if you were to pay more than so much," is a favourite phrase with him if he thinks that he is being remunerated for his work at a higher rate than it merits. He is the most disinterested and the least self-indulgent of men apart from his hobby—Paris. Now, there is no city in the world where the thirst for guidance is so intense as in Paris, and no foreigner who develops that thirst more acutely than the American. He wants to probe to the depths, to see and touch all that he has ever heard or read of as being worth the seeing and touching, to be shown Old Paris, to dine at restaurants which have literary or historic interest, to visit the little *gargote* where Thackeray, when an art student, ate his beefsteak, the street close by where Trilby lived, the hotel, not a stone's-throw away, where Paul Jones died, the Louis Quinze mansion in the Rue de Braque where the Marquis de Vergennes drew up the preliminaries to the treaty of peace between America and England after the War of Independence. Discreet

questioning at certain American bookshops will reveal to this American the personality and the address of Mr. O'Shaughnessy, who will for a modest remuneration act as his guide. With the money thus earned Mr. O'Shaughnessy will purchase some rare book or engraving connected with Paris, some long-sought-for document to be utilized in the preparation of his erudite work, "The Irish Americans in the French Revolution"—so many offerings which he places upon the altar of his divinity, Paris.

The woman guide. Neither quite young nor quite plain.

A bachelor woman of tireless energy, with a long stride in her walk which repeats itself in her voice. She lives rent-free in one room in an hotel close to the boulevards. Her existence is purely one of commission. Whatever she does brings her in at least ten per cent.; at the restaurants, where she takes her hurried meals, she obtains a reduction of ten per cent. The theatre managers love her, and give her free tickets, which she sells for half-price at the little tobacco shop in the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin. Her clothes cost her nothing. Publishers inundate her with books. Her collection of pictures and other works of art is worth a small fortune. She knows Paris as only a woman can





HER CLOTHES COST HER NOTHING.

know it, as only a woman wants to know it. She is rapidly becoming rich, for the smart American women whom she chaperones and guides pay her handsomely. She takes them to the races, and makes money there, too ; for she bets brilliantly. She has no unnecessary prejudices, but all the prejudices that are necessary she cherishes, and displays to their fullest advantage. She knows nothing that she cannot use. She is engaged to be married, and has been so for years ; but nobody knows to whom, for that is her secret, and perhaps by now she herself has forgotten. She is too hard-working to be elegant, but is careful of her person in the interests of the commission business. Miss Grace Green from Chicago can be heard of at the offices of the tourist agencies, at the women's clubs, at the American churches. Every Sunday she dines in the palatial flat of an American dentist whose wife is her dearest friend. Soon she will give up being a guide, to plunge into some even more profitable and unscrupulous occupation, such as canvassing for advertisements or writing plays. Or perhaps—for to her energy and spirit of enterprise there are no limits—she may become an air-woman, and break her neck.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MOVEMENT OF PARIS

IN no city in the world is there a greater sense of movement than in Paris. The masses which London sets in movement are more ponderous ; there is more "hustle" in New York ; but the impression of movement, intricate to the point of entanglement, animated, gesticulatory, and almost frenzied, is nowhere more intense than in Paris. For this, of course, the French character is responsible. The Parisian is never still for a moment at any hour of the day. He may remain, and every often does, seated for long spells in a café, apparently doing nothing ; but during the whole time his jaws and tongue, his eyebrows and his eyes, his arms, hands, and fingers, will be working furiously, and so, too, will his brain. Everybody around him will be equally on the move. The café waiters are serving bocks on the run. Their endurance is amazing, unparalleled. They keep up a constant sprint from one end of the establishment

to the other, without apparently tiring or losing their patience, or, what is quite as wonderful, their memory, which remains to the end phenomenally accurate as to the minutest details of the orders which they have received. The messenger, or *chasseur*, who is at the service of the customers, never dreams of walking. His favourite method of progression is a kind of long-flying hop, varied with leaps and skips, except when he is provided with a bicycle; and then he shoots and winds his way at headlong speed through the complicated traffic of the streets, risking his life at every corner, for nowhere is the danger of being run over greater than it is in Paris. He earns nothing in addition to his ordinary fee by taking these shocking chances. But it is in his Parisian blood, and he cannot help it. The Frenchman has always been the pioneer of speed. For many years, and until quite recently (perhaps it is so still), it was a French railway that held the world's record for the fastest train. This was the mail express between Paris and Calais. The Frenchman cared nothing for sport until the bicycle was invented, and then he showed the world how to ride to death on it; and it was his passion for speed which called the automobile into being. The *furia francesca* is as visible to-day in the

charge of an "autobus" along the Boulevard Montmartre as in its historical application to the French soldier's onslaught at the Battle of Pavia. The French *tempo* marks with its demon rage the wave of the conductor's baton at musical entertainments, the waltzing at public balls, the debates in Parliament, and, generally speaking, every public and particular function common to humanity, from the use of the knife and fork to falling in love.

This feverish vivacity is the first thing that strikes the foreigner on arriving in Paris. He is conscious at once of an atmosphere of turmoil. The porters on the railway platform are around him like angry bees, or, in spite of any effort to attract their attention, they neglect him for the sake of endless disputes with one another about matters into which it is hopeless to inquire. Curiosity would even be resented. It is, alas! too often a case of *cherchez la femme*. But once you have induced the porter to cease his private and, at the same time, too public quarrel and take your bag, and you have noticed how the solemn and slow-moving Anglo-Saxons, who have been your fellow-travellers, have suddenly been infected by the Parisian spirit of bustle, how promptly they have adopted the same *tempo*, pushing, clamouring, and pro-

testing, seeking even to invent on the spur of the moment a language of gesticulation in response to a language wholly or mainly unknown to them, but to all appearances chiefly gesticulatory, you will find yourself and your baggage in the hands of the Paris cabman, who is one of the princes or leading spirits of the city's movement. This is true still, although the advent of the motor-car has threatened the Paris cabman's throne without having overturned it, as is the case with the London cabman. The Paris cabman is still a potentate, a feudal despot, monarch of all he surveys, wielding his untiring whip as if it were a royal sceptre—the most arrogant, proud, cruel, godless, feckless, sanguinary tyrant that Christendom and modern civilization have suffered to survive. Of all men in the world, it is he who gives and claims the minimum of sympathy. If it were so to happen that to-morrow all the Paris cabmen were to find themselves on the brink of starvation, not one little finger would be raised throughout the entire metropolis to save or succour them. In London, on the contrary, the cabman, who has always been a respected institution, has found himself raised to the dignity of a national martyr, since the introduction of the motor-car seemed destined to deprive

him of his livelihood. Paris would never have subscribed eight thousand pounds, as London did, or even ten cents, to rescue her cabmen from any fate, however horrible. She hates them too much, and she knows how richly and, in a measure, deservedly that hatred is returned. That this should be so is due in a large measure to the fact that the French are the most bellicose race on earth. The peculiarity was noticed some centuries ago by no less a personage than Julius Cæsar, and the Gauls have since amply maintained their reputation for internecine quarrelling. Among Anglo-Saxons there is a general and instinctive desire to do business on the basis of an *entente cordiale*. In Paris the hailing of a cabman is looked on by both parties to the transaction as an implied declaration of war. The cabman takes your measure, and you take his number (if you are wise). At once he will give you reason to remark that he has a rooted and premeditated objection to drive you where you wish to go. Perhaps he prefers the Opéra quarter because it is central, or, should the weather be fine, his heart is probably set upon driving in the Bois, while you may have business at the Bourse. He explains his views on the subject selfishly and rudely. A foreigner alighted recently from the Calais train

at the Northern Railway station in Paris, and ordered a typical Parisian cabman, bloated, pale, and absinth-soaked, to drive him to the Rue Blomet, which is a street in the relatively distant Vaugirard quarter. "Peut on habiter la Rue Blomet?" (Is it possible to inhabit the Rue Blomet?) exclaimed the ragged ruffian on an epigrammatic note of disdain which would have done honour to Beau Brummell. But it is when the Paris cabman has once started on his "course"—a warpath in the strict sense of the term—that he proves to what a limitless extent he is the enemy of mankind. His hatred of the bourgeois—the "man in the street"—in spite of, and indeed because of, his being a potential client, is expressed at every yard. He constantly tries to run him down, which makes strangers to Paris accuse the Paris cabman of driving badly, while in point of fact he is not driving at all, but playing with miraculous skill a game of his own, which suggests cannon billiards in the hands of a world's champion. But it is not with the public alone that he is at war. On all other cabmen whose path he crosses, on omnibus drivers, motor-car men, bicyclists, private coachmen, costermongers with barrows, and (*sotto voce*) the police, he heaps deadly insults, the least outrageous of which are



“Ours!” (Bear!) and “Fourneau!” (Oven!), the latter containing a subtle double meaning, intelligible only to those who have Paris argot, or slang, at their finger-ends, and too long to explain. The cabman’s wild career through the streets, the constant waving and slashing of his pitiless whip, his madcap hurtlements and collisions, the frenzied gesticulations which he exchanges with his “fare,” the panic-stricken flight of the agonized women whose lives he has endangered, the ugly rushes which the public occasionally make at him with a view to lynching him, the sprawlings and fallings of his maddened, hysterical, starving horse, contribute as much as anything to the spasmodic intensity, the electric blue-fire diablerie, which are characteristic of the general movement of Paris.

All that can be said in mitigation of the Paris cabman’s methods is that “he has them in the blood.” Every Parisian (and the cabman is no exception) has the soul of a dictator and the spirit of an artist. To exercise autocratic power, and failing this to enjoy the maximum of personal freedom from all restraint, moral or social, is the goal at which he is ever aiming, openly or secretly. Watch a Paris cabman, for instance, on a wet day, or on some festival

occasion, such as the New Year, when there is a big demand for his services. With what haughty disdain does he drive along the streets, deaf to every appeal, refusing every fare, rejoicing in the discomfort and inconvenience he is causing, triumphant in the thought that at last he has the bourgeois at his feet, that the clientele which he detests and which detests him is now a humiliated, bemuddled, or bedraggled mob of supplicants waiting on his will, whom he can enrage to boiling-point with his sneers and his silence, or lash with his sarcasms as cruelly as he beats his horse. Cheerfully does he sacrifice half a day's earnings to the enjoyment of this exquisite revenge, for at least he can say to his hungry wife and children, when he gets home, "J'ai vécu." They may not have dined, but he has lived. It is because the Parisian recognizes in himself a certain community of sentiment with the cabman in this attitude toward life that he tolerates him, though he does not forgive him. The Imperial, the Napoleonic pose (and no one can assume it with more superb arrogance than the cabman when he pleases) is ever dear to him, and the historic phrase, "Qu'important de vagues humanités pourvu que le geste soit beau!" (What does the fate of vague human beings matter, so



THE CAFÉ WAITERS ARE SERVING "BOCKS" ON  
THE RUN



THE STately MOVEMENT OF THE FUNERAL  
STOPS ALL OTHER TRAFFIC



long as one's gesture is beautiful !), is among his treasured maxims.

The motor-car driver, if less of an artist than the cabman, is a man of science, with the added dignity and trustworthiness derived from a superior education, and from a sense of belonging to the inscrutable future ; while the cabman confessedly belongs to the past, and has, indeed, always placed his political influence, which is considerable, at the service of reactionary movements. The last great conspiracy in France, that of General Boulanger, by which the Republican régime came within an inch of being overthrown, had no more enthusiastic backers than the Paris cabmen. The Paris chauffeur is the best in Europe, and perhaps in the world ; and though he seldom respects the limit of speed imposed by the police regulations, it is not often that a serious accident can be attributed to his negligence or incapacity. This excellent reputation he shares with the omnibus drivers and the chauffeurs, or " wattmen," as they are called (for an unknown reason), of the electric tramways—all sober and experienced men. The omnibus and the tramway systems, protected by strict monopolies, organized with meticulous method, conducted by uniformed officials who bully the public, are

an exact reflection of Parisian middle-class life. The innate conservatism of this monopoly-loving country has prevented both omnibus and tramway from moving with the times, and Paris, of all the great capitals of the world, is unique in this respect—that she still possesses a one-horse tramway, the strange old-fashioned thing, a relic of the Second Empire, which runs between St. Sulpice and Auteuil, drawn by a phantom-like white horse, which, in spite of its phenomenal age and extraordinary thinness, gallops along with uncanny speed. The movement on the Paris boulevards derives much of its picturesqueness from the ponderous omnibus plunging and thundering along with its variegated load of human beings, a perambulating parterre of flowers in leafy June, a black and hearse-like object, with its compact hooding of streaming umbrellas, in cheerless winter. The motor-cars flashing in swiftest procession along a central passage specially reserved for them; the skimming bicycles; the handsomely-equipped carriages; the occasional four-in-hand, or “mail-coach,” with its echoing horn; the open cabs whose drivers are partially reconciled to humanity by the beauty and gaiety around them; the smart riders on their gleaming horses; the shimmer and glitter of the lovely gowns and

the dazzling faces of their wearers; the slow-moving crowds of well-dressed and leisured folk beneath the blazing green trees, with little children, bright as butterflies, darting in and out among them; the martial bravery of a squadron of cuirassiers escorting the President in a carriage, with red-cockaded coachmen and footmen; the lumbering water-carts, spreading out from behind them their silver fans of liquid freshness, make up the typical movement on a spring afternoon in the Champs Élysées; and an exquisite combination it is of colour, light, and sound, all in harmonious movement together, a veritable polonaise worthy of Chopin, with the Arc de Triomphe, a symbolic portal, towering in the distance.

This is the movement of wealthy, easy-going Paris, from which the coarser elements of commercial and industrial traffic are by special regulation excluded. But all roads in France lead to Paris, and through the various gates of the city there passes all day long a steady stream of carts and drays and tumbrils loaded with the produce of the most fertile country in Europe, and these cumbersome vehicles have a tendency to concentrate at busy points, notably in the neighbourhood of the Central Markets. Wine, after its passage through the great depot at

Bercy, arrives in mighty casks attached to two immensely long tree-trunks, parallel with one another, and balanced between two high wheels ; and this primitive and barbarous carriage drags its slow length along the teeming thoroughfare like a huge alligator. A string of twenty horses or more of the splendid Percheron breed from Normandy draws painfully up the steep inclines, leading from the quays a monumental load of white stone blocks which have been quarried in Normandy from the flanks of those selfsame cliffs and dunes which a thousand years ago supplied the stones for Notre Dame. Tall Normans with white blouses and enormous white felt hats urge on the teams in a patois which is still the legal language of England, cracking whips which are many yards in length, while the bells on the harness jingle sweetly, and the parti-coloured ribbons and plumes, with which the horses' heads are bedizened, flutter and nod. This black tumbril filled with coal, which is coming up behind, is exactly similar to the ignoble cart in which Marie Antoinette was conveyed to the guillotine. An awkward, almost square thing, on two high wheels, with sides slanting outward from the bottom, it has a sinister appearance, due no doubt in part to the gruesome associations of a shape which has



not changed since the sanguinary days of the Revolution. It is a ramshackle contrivance, and the sight of a tumbril with one of its wheels broken to pieces, and most of its burden of coal lying in the middle of the road, is of such constant occurrence at the foot of the hill in the Rue Lafayette that it may be accounted among the daily amusements of the Parisian lounge. On the other hand, a really admirable spectacle is the arrival after midnight of the great country carts from the market-gardens around Paris, piled to a giddy height with tier upon tier of vegetables. In the deep blue atmosphere of the night, against the gleam of the rare gas-lamps, the red of the carrots, the dead white of the turnips, and the sea-greens of the cabbages, acquire such a splendour and richness of quality as make the heart leap if one has any love of colour.

“Processional colour,” if one may use such a term, is specially dear to the Parisian, and he manipulates it with rare skill, boldly but harmoniously, without vulgar or garish effects. The solemn funerals, with their flower-heaped hearses, at the passage of which every man and boy raises his hat, while the womankind cross themselves; the marriage cortèges, with masses of white—whiteness of bridal gowns, bouquets,

displayed shirt-fronts and cream-lined coaches, supply daily notes of colour to the ever-moving vision of Paris. The stately movement of the funeral stops all other traffic, hushes it into reverent silence—such is the Parisian respect for the dead ; and if it be some naval or military officer or dignitary of the Legion of Honour who is being buried, the black line of the mourners passes along the streets relieved by the red and blue uniforms of the military escort, or perhaps by the green of an academician's livery ; the yellow, red, or purple, or a professor's robe, with its dappled ermine ; the white ostrich plumes of an ambassadorial cocked hat.

■ Bitterness of feeling between political parties is such that religious processions and parades, with display of insignia and banners and accompaniment of bands, by patriotic leagues, free-masons, trade corporations, and guilds of all kinds, have gradually been discouraged to the point of practical suppression. But Paris does not forget that, while rivalling other capitals in respect of commercial and cosmopolitan development, she possesses a unique interest as the home of the most powerful University in the world, the centre of attraction to the youth of France, the educational nursery of her statesmen and of the vast array of function-

aries by whom the affairs of the country are administered. She is therefore indulgent to the high spirits of her student population, whose *mônômes* (long processions in Indian file), generally undertaken for the purpose of protesting against some unpopular action by the Minister of Public Instruction, who is ex-officio Grand Master of the University, occasionally "descend" from the Latin Quarter on the left bank of the Seine, and invade the more decorous boulevards of the right bank. Wearing large velvet *bérets*, or tam-o'-shanter caps, trimmed and beribboned with the colours of their respective faculties—the last vestiges in France of the student costume of the Middle Ages, and surviving in the stiffened mortar-board variety peculiar to England and America—the students speed along at an amazingly rapid pace, cutting through the traffic like a knife, chanting their protestations as they go, to some popular tune. Sudden and spontaneous, and with a brightness of colour and a youthful gaiety all its own, the students' *monôme* is one of the many expressions of wit and humour which characterize the movement of Paris. At carnival time, and on the great national fête-day of July 14, the city is one moving sea of exuberant fun and saturnalian jollity. The main thoroughfares are given up

to the exclusive possession of the holiday-makers. The multicoloured paper confetti and the *serpentins*, which, by the way, are Parisian inventions now adopted for festival occasions all the world over, give to the streets the same vibratory colour and effect of disintegrated sunshine which the impressionist painters seek to render in their pictures—an atmosphere in brilliant movement, palpitating with the joy of living. But, of all movement in the Paris streets, none stirs the emotions more than that of the national flag when it flutters in the breeze. Its red, white, and blue, in plain juxtaposition without device or added design, have a charm of dignity and simplicity which explains much of the passionate devotion which all Frenchmen feel for it, and is a preponderating reason why, in spite of many changes of régime, no other flag has taken its place. All flags hide in their folds the power of arousing subtle and delicate sensations. Prone upon the coffin of a hero, or brooding in the stillness of a panoply, they strike a note of majestic pathos peculiar to themselves, while in the endless variety of movements which they snatch from the wind as they fly at a mast-head they seem to be signalling, to all who have eyes to see, ineffable things, the tale of “ battles long ago,” the epic of dead glories and great

examples. Above much that is sordid and sorrowful in the record of the French Republic, the tricolour still maintains its spotless symbolic character. Its red, white and blue stand for the three great humane ideals of the republican motto—liberty, equality, and fraternity, the gospel of the Revolution, and the burden of the message which the victorious eagles of Napoleon spread over the Old World. On July 14, the anniversary of the capture and the destruction of the Bastille, the streets of Paris, particularly in the populous quarters, are vistas of red, white, and blue, myriads of tricolour flags being suspended from windows and balconies, and stretched across the roadways in a kind of patriotic and republican embrace from house to house. All Paris is in a flutter with these waving emblems of joy and peace and good-will, and the delirious crowds dancing beneath them in a spirit of perfect democracy which admits of no social distinctions, but is none the less governed and restrained by an innate polish of manners, realize under the magic of their spell, for the few hours that the fête lasts, the three ideal conditions of the national device.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE NEWS OF THE DAY IN PARIS

THERE is no individual type of Frenchmen to which some French paper does not respond. It may be doubted whether in any other country the analogy is so complete. A German professor of psychology has commented on the subtle affinity between the slices of roast beef in the London restaurants and the size of the *Times*. But neither in America nor England is the national life reflected by the political press so completely as in France.

Take the sober and serious Frenchman, reserved in speech, inexpansive except when embracing relatives on railway platforms, cultured, keen in business, a little "near," moderate in politics as in all things. He is a republican, for it would be repugnant to him to be "agin the Government"; but he has no more faith in Socialism than in the possible restoration of a monarchy. He is sceptical, but respects religion. He is patriotic, yet a lover of peace.

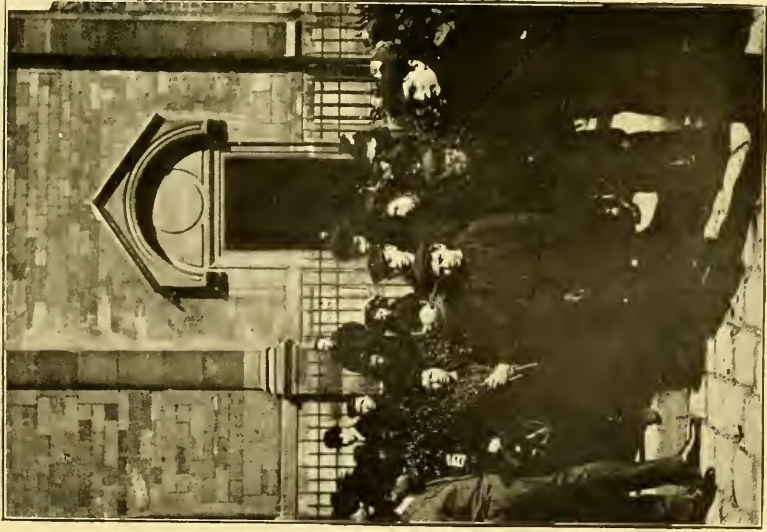
Towards foreign countries he is polite without enthusiasm ; his sincere admiration for America is tempered by a little bewilderment ; he has loyally accepted the *entente cordiale*, while holding that England has much the best of the bargain. He is sometimes gay, but with a rigid decorum ; frequents the Comédie Française ; and, while never exceeding a proper limit, has a rational taste for good wine, good cheer, and a pretty face. This first-class citizen reads the *Temps*. His family name is Prudhomme, but he is an improvement on that famous ancestor of his who gave lustre to the reign of Louis Philippe.

His antithesis is talkative, passionate Monsieur Chauvin, who, with his wild gestures and wilder statements, his incredible credulity, his fantastic hatreds, and equally inexplicable *engouements*, is all that is left to us (ladies and gentlemen !) of Don Quixote—a Don Quixote of the boulevard, with flat-brimmed Montmartre hat in place of the barber's basin, and an umbrella as obese and as faithful as Sancho Panza. Chauvin's materializations are many. If a Bonapartist, and haunted by the Napoleonic legend, he subscribes to the *Autorité*—that Bobadil of one-cent dailies ; to the *Libre Parole*, if his creed be the extermination of the alien and the Jew ; to the *Vérité Française*, if he confound

patriotism with orthodoxy, and look upon the Protestant nations as the inveterate enemies of France. Monsieur Chauvin shakes hands with Henri Rochefort (when the great pamphletist has not managed to avoid him, as he generally tries to), and acknowledges the inextinguishable verve of the *Patrie's* leading article. For the *Patrie* is Henri Rochefort—and naught else. And Henri Rochefort is the reincarnation of that same aristocratic and revolutionary spirit which animated Mirabeau. Like Mirabeau, he has overthrown a monarchy by the power of the word, written if not spoken. He has the same passionate love of freedom and mistrust of the mob. He remains a Marquis to the finger-tips, in spite of himself. And, as he has humorously remarked, when his enemies wish to wound him most, they remind him of his title. Every cabman and café waiter in Paris reads the *Patrie*. Henri Rochefort is nearly eighty, but he is still the youngest and wittiest leader-writer in the world.

But Mirabeau *redivivus* and Monsieur Chauvin are but voices in the wilderness of the republican press. In the *Humanité* of M. Jaures we have, typified, the popular tribune of to-day, upon whom has fallen the mantle of Gambetta, with an eloquence as unquenchable as was that of





BRANCHES OF CONSECRATED BOXWOOD ARE SOLD  
OUTSIDE ALL THE CHURCHES



“IL ARRIVE, IL ARRIVE, LE MAQUEREAU!”



the inspired Jew of Genoa, but with a programme which is not yet "ministrable," because it is still professedly Collectivist. Here we have oratory "with the paunch" which Lavengro found to be indispensable, and that wealth of rolling "r's" without which the French demagogue would be lost. *C'est l'Humanité toute entière-r-re, monsieur!* M. Jaures is merely Gambetta's rhetorical Elijah, but among the numberless "favourite disciples" of the "Master" are Joseph Reinach, the editor of Gambetta's speeches, whose influence is predominant in the *République Française*, the organ of discreet Moderantism; and Yves Guyot, who in the *Siècle* has for years advocated free trade and friendship with England; while over a host of other organs, both in Paris and the provinces, the cult of Gambetta throws a mysterious politico-religious light similar to that of Buddha over the East. The Gambettists, who include Déroulède and Delcasse, the opposite poles of political thought, dispute among themselves as to which interprets the "Master's" ideas, forgetting that he was the inventor of Opportunism, which means changing one's coat.

Your out-and-out radical, atheist, freemason, and devourer of curés, reads the *Lanterne*. To him the sight of a priest is like a red rag to a bull.

So he thinks and talks of little else but religion. Frankly anticlerical, but less rabid, are the *Radical* and the *Rappel*. These three are one-cent papers. Parisians of the lower middle class are, as a rule, Voltairean. But your concierge, having to satisfy many consciences before he can expect his annual tip, takes in the *Petit Journal* or the *Petit Parisien*, which, having no clearly defined religious opinions, can be displayed in his *loge* without danger. And these papers make a speciality of city news—the *fait divers*—which keenly appeals to “Monsieur Pipelet’s” notorious love of gossip.

In addition to the *Vérité Française*, the Churchman has the *Croix*, the *Univers*, the *Monde*, the *Patrie*, the *Presse*. Monarchy’s fading charms are celebrated in the *Gaulois* and the *Soleil*, but the only official organ of the Duc d’Orléans is the *Correspondance Nationale, et Nouvelles*, a lithographed sheet distributed to about five hundred papers throughout France. A journal that does justice to its name is the *Figaro*. It whispers the latest *on dit* into its client’s ear, while recommending at the same time, on its front page, so wittily and insinuatingly, the newest brand of soap, that the Barber of Seville in person seems to be bending over him. Nation-

alism claims the *Écho de Paris*, with an admirable foreign news service, and the *Eclair* ; but the one is pro and the other anti Anglo-Saxon. The *Matin* belongs to a class of newspaper whose main principle, or lack of principle, is the business principle, as does the *Gil Blas*, and in some measure the *Journal*. The *Liberté* is a moderate and well-spoken Republican sheet, preferring news to views. It traces its inspirations to Gambetta. With the oldest and most brilliant Republican record in France, the *Journal des Débats*, to which Taine, Renan, and all the great French thinkers since the Revolution, have contributed, remains Republican ; but it has gradually veered round to a sage Conservatism, and frankly sided with the Church during the debates on the Concordat.

A word now as to the relative political importance and inner workings of the principal French papers. The most influential is the *Temps*, the most widely circulated the *Croix*. The *Temps*, which is edited by Senator Hébrard, is Progressist, Protestant, and Swiss. It favours the establishment of a working compact between all the Republican groups on the basis of a moderate and conciliatory Liberalism. Some of the most valued writers on the *Temps* staff are of the Protestant faith, and in touch

with Geneva. Its financial information is of the best. The *Croix* is the organ of the curés, and, apart from the parent edition, published in Paris, there are nearly two hundred local *Croix*'s, which circulate in different parts of the provinces, the most important being the *Croix du Nord*. Its influence is therefore vast. The *Croix* belongs to M. Vrau, a wealthy manufacturer of sewing-thread at Rouen, who is backed by the Assumptionist Fathers. M. Vrau has also just purchased the *Patrie* and the *Presse*, formerly Nationalist organs, which came into the market in consequence of the bankruptcy of their owner, the Cotton King, M. Jules Jaluzot. After the *Croix*, the most widely circulated papers are the *Petit Journal* and the *Petit Parisien*. Ex-Senator Privet, a Nationalist, controls the former, which was founded by Marinoni, the inventor of the rotatory printing-press. The *Petit Parisien* is the property of Senator Jean Dupuy, formerly Minister of Agriculture, and, like the *Petit Journal*, its circulation approaches the million. Its great rival is the *Matin*, which is the property of a company controlled by M. Bunau-Varilla, the brother of the Panama expert, and is the only exponent, now that the *Petit Bleu* has disappeared, of a yellow journalism ostensibly imitated from America.

The offspring of the *Morning News*, the first Anglo-Saxon paper on American lines published in Paris, which was owned by the late Dr. Thomas Evans, the American dentist and diplomat, but succumbed to the competition of the *New York Herald*, the *Matin* is edited by an adopted son and nephew of a former Paris correspondent of the *Times*. The *Journal* runs the *Matin* close both as to circulation and news, but attains to a much higher literary standard. It belongs to M. Letellier, the wealthy Government contractor, and, like the *Matin*, is constitutionally Ministerial. None of the other Paris papers attain to anything like the circulation of those just mentioned. The *Figaro*, which is the French paper best known abroad, lost caste with a section of its subscribers through the Dreyfus case, but is recovering its ground under the editorship of M. Gason Calmette. Its misfortunes have mainly benefited its younger rival, the *Gaulois*, which, under the direction of M. Arthur Mayer, is an uncompromising champion of Orleanism and the Church. The personal relations between M. Mayer and the Orleanist pretender, the present Duc d'Orléans, are officially known to be something less than cordial, but the editor of the *Gaulois* persists in being more Royalist than the "Roy,"

just as he conducts an antisemitic campaign, although himself an Israelite. The Duc d'Orléans, in his lithographed organ, *Correspondance Nationale, et Nouvelles*, has declared strongly in favour of an alliance with England, and the concentration of all the national forces against Germany; but M. Mayer, whose *bons mots*, especially the unconscious ones, are traditional, is opposed to the nation that burned Jeanne d'Arc, and sums up the present situation in the words, "Soyons nous-même!" Another independent Monarchist organ which was hit hard by the Dreyfus affair (its editor went mad) is the *Soleil*, founded and raised to a fine pitch of prosperity by that brilliant historian and Academician, the late Édouard Hervé, but now sadly fallen from its high estate. There are three political daily papers in the provinces which deserve mention—the *Petit Marseillais*, the *Dépêche de Toulouse*, and the *Nouvelliste de Lyon*. They are all Republican and Ministerial. Their success, however, is largely due to the fact that they are outside the range of the *Petit Journal* and the *Petit Parisien*.

To describe in detail the many other, but less significant, organs of public opinion in France would need a volume, which by the time it was completed would have to be written all over



again ; for, fickle as a woman, the French Press is constantly changing its coat, or, at least, the cut and colour of it. You may safely say that no Paris paper is to-day, from the point of view of its political opinions, the same that it was ten, or even five, years ago ; but in respect to its editorial methods and general machinery, the French Press is an antiquated survival as compared with that of England and America. Its very print seems to be perfumed with memories of the eighteenth century. Its paper has a ghostly transparency, the thinness and greyness of a souvenir. Bright exceptions there are, but they are few, and the true Frenchman looks at them askance, holding their origin to be suspicious and their attitude disloyal.

## CHAPTER X

### AMERICANS IN PARIS

SOMEONE has said that, whereas the American Colony "run" London, the reverse is the case in Paris. There is truth in this, though the statement must not be taken as final. Paris boasts, and for many reasons rightly, of being the City of Light (*a Ville Lumière*), and would resent a suggestion that she was profoundly affected by foreign influences. None the less, Paris society, whether it likes to admit it or not, has been undergoing for years past a slow process of Americanization. Ever since the United States have been an independent nation the American has been popular in Paris. Just before the French Revolution broke out, Benjamin Franklin was the social hero of the hour. Everything was *à la Franklin*—the Franklin hat, the Franklin perruque, the Franklin stick. He was the first American to live at Passy. And Passy, the picturesque suburb to the west of Paris, where a seated statue of him by an

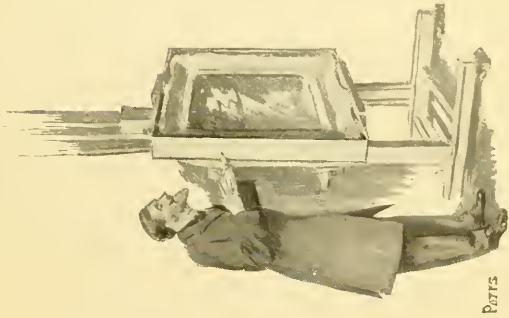
American sculptor preserves his memory, has since become a favourite place of residence for Americans, who like the quiet seclusion of its wide streets and leafy avenues, the comfort of its spacious villas, and the charm of its vast gardens, with their walls muffled in old-world ivy.

With but one break since Benjamin Franklin's time, the French have been animated by a feeling of personal affection for Americans—for the "Sister Republic"—based upon a communion of democratic ideas, a feeling which has been extended to no other country.

One notices this sentiment on all the public occasions that bring Americans and Parisians together. When the American Chamber of Commerce gives its annual banquet, the speeches delivered by the president of the chamber, by the American Ambassador, who is always present, and the replies made to them by the representatives of the French Government, of whom the Prime Minister for the time being is generally one, show an absence of diplomatic reserve, which is lacking to similar functions organized by the Chambers of Commerce of other nationalities. The French Government adds a further distinction by surrounding the banqueting-hall with a special guard of honour,

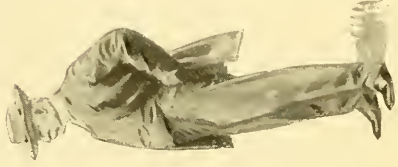
composed of troopers of the Republican Guard in their brilliant helmets and breastplates. The *entente cordiale* with England, the alliance with Russia, are political and commercial understandings with ancient rivals. The sisterly love which France cherishes for the great Transatlantic Republic, which she helped to create, persists unto the present day. However, it must be admitted, Parisians sometimes express a good-humoured alarm at what they call the *Américanisation* of their capital.

This is of two sorts. The influence of the American who is travelling is different from that of the American Colony, but it has had permanent and overwhelming consequences. All that is superficial in the life of Paris, all those special elements of Parisianism of which the most ignorant visitor has a vague knowledge before leaving his native country—for to him they are the chief attraction of Paris—have been of recent years affected by American influence as they never were before. The American traveller, whose numbers are yearly increasing, has revolutionized the "gay" side of the city. He has rendered it more pompous, and therefore less gay in the strictly Parisian sense, but more dazzling and more noisy. Montmartre, which was so truly and wittily Parisian, has undergone



Perris

THERE IS NO ONE POSSESSED OF A BAD COPY  
 OF RUBENS WHO IS NOT LONGING FOR  
 AN "AMÉRICAIN RICHISSIME"



Perris.



A POET RECITING IN A MONTMARTRE CAFÉ



an entire change. Its one-time gentle denizens—for, in spite of their extravagance of manners and audacity of imagination, they had the instinctive and natural gentleness of artists—have fled from their old haunts like a herd of giraffes from their native prairies before the invasion of a crowd of big-game shooters. It was the inexpressible charm of its feckless and reckless devotion to the twin divinities of Bohemia—Art and Beauty—which made Montmartre such a magnet: “the hub of the universe,” as one of its illustrious inhabitants baptized it. It has succumbed to its own popularity. Famous places of amusement, where formerly the long-haired poet with the flat-brimmed hat would, in the early hours of the morning, recite one of those humorous-pathetic poems so typical of Montmartre, amid the applause of a company in which painters, sculptors, writers, riffraff, and mere amateurs of beer-drinking and late hours, consorted without pose and on terms of equality, have now, while retaining their old “Chatnoir-esque” names, taken on a cosmopolitan and braggadocio air. The quaint pictures on the walls have given way to brilliant mirrors. Niggers in red swallowtail coats and black “smalls,” dancing a cake-walk with Spanish ballerinas, have driven out poets and artists.

Where beer flowed only champagne is now served. The men are in evening-dress, and nine-tenths of them are Americans. Pierrot and Pierrette have fled. Oddly enough to the American, fresh from New York or Boston, there is nothing in these extravagant scenes of gaiety which is in the least degree American. He enjoys the scene because it is so different from anything that he is accustomed to witness at home. Nor is it French. Yet, from the honest effort of the restaurant cook to produce Boston baked beans, to the strugglings of the orchestra with "rag-time" music, the whole is a distorted reflection, as in a freak mirror, of what the American might be imagined to want. The Parisian thinks it is American. By his applause the American confirms this view, but is all the time under the impression that the entertainment is typically Parisian. The experienced American knows full well that there is nothing of the real Paris in these weird performances. To the old-time inhabitant of the Montmartre Bohemia, which at the apogee of its sway sent an artistic, and at the same time humane and individual, throb throughout the intellectual world, this hybrid *Américainisation* is fruitful of sentimental regrets. "Where," they mutter, adapting the language of their beloved patron,



Villon—"where are the Black Cat and the Dead Rat of yester-year!"

Time was—it was in the fifties—when the average Parisian of neglected education—and he was in the majority—was under a vague impression that all Americans were black. It was habitual with him to express astonishment at the appearance of a purely white specimen. To-day he is convinced that all Americans are millionaires, and in this sweeping generalization he is encouraged by the obstinate refusal of the Paris papers to refer to an American, visiting or residing in Paris, otherwise than as the *richissime* (enormously rich) Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So. This possession of enormous wealth is widely supposed to be coincident with an unlimited gullibility in all that concerns the acquisition of works of art. There is no one in Paris possessed of a bad copy from Rubens, a sham Corot, an eighteenth-century panel falsely attributed to Fragonard, who is not longing for an *Américain richissime* to drop in and buy it for a fantastic price. "Ah, *my* American!" sighs such a one (the American whom his fancy has so long depicted has at last become his chattel)—"when will he arrive? Why does he tarry? One million five hundred thousand francs is all that I ask for this unrivalled Gobelin

tapestry, originally presented to Benjamin Franklin by Louis XVI." (it is a bad Flemish "fake"). "Alas! if he does not come soon, I shall have to double the price!" It not infrequently happens that the deluded Frenchman spends the rest of his life thus mentally beckoning to, and impatiently awaiting, the impalpable American of his dreams. The delusion, of course, is complete. The American demand for European works of art has caused a great rise in prices, but it would dawn on anybody but a Frenchman that the American millionaire is invariably a keen man of business, even when he happens to be a spendthrift, and that when he is not himself an expert in art matters, at least he knows the conditions of the market in which he is dealing, and surrounds himself with the necessary guarantees.

\What is responsible for a general rise in the price of living in those parts of Paris where Americans reside, either as casual visitors or permanent members of the colony, is the American habit of wastefulness. To this is largely due the general belief in Paris that all Americans have a great deal more money than they know what to do with. The French never waste anything. It was that trait in their character which, more than anything else, struck

one of the wealthiest of America's millionaires when, a short time ago, he visited this country for the first time. Not a scrap of land that can possibly bear cultivation is lying fallow. The French housewife throws practically nothing away. Even the ultimate refuse of her dust-bin is carefully gone over every morning by diligent ragpickers, sorted out into a dozen different categories, and sold for further utilization. Such a narrow margin to life is incomprehensible to the American, with his native sense of space and the boyish extravagance which is part of his national birthright. In Paris it is the passage and presence of Americans, especially of the womenfolk, which have largely contributed to raise prices all round in the wealthier districts, and have tripled the demands of hotel-keepers and dressmakers. But fifteen years ago there was not one good hotel in Paris. Now there are several. They have been built with a view to meeting the American demand. The American love of cleanliness has revolutionized the Paris hotel, and has proved a great boon to the city, having brought about a vast improvement in general sanitary conditions, and thus helped, without any doubt, to reduce the annual death-rate. This beneficial influence has been extended far and wide in France by the numerous

families of American motorists, who have explored every nook and corner of the provinces. Paris dressmakers have been inspired to more artistic efforts by the American demand. Genius is helpless without an intelligent Mæcenas. If the French dressmakers had had to rely for the foreign patronage which constitutes so important an element of their clientele mainly on the English and the Russians, their art would have been like a ship waterlogged in a dead sea or stranded on barbarian shores. That their art has successfully avoided these two forms of shipwreck, by which it was seriously menaced twenty years ago, is due to the quick American appreciation of all that is novel and inventive, the American willingness to encourage, regardless of expense, explorations along untrodden paths in the boundless realm of the beautiful, and, above all, to the unrivalled capacity of the American woman for giving quality and dignity to whatever she wears.

To understand the position occupied by the American Colony in Paris society, it must be remembered that, unlike any other European country of first-class importance, France is a republic, governed in the main by an aristocracy of intellect. There is an aristocracy of birth, with which many splendid historical tra-

ditions are bound up, but the absence of a Court has deprived it of the central point to which it would naturally gravitate, and has caused it to break up into cliques. These cliques may, roughly speaking, be divided into the monarchical set, which includes Royalists and Imperialists, who, though politically at loggerheads, are united in the determination to have the best of all that life can afford ; the clerical set, austere and unyielding, *collet-monté* (high-necked), as the French say, and socially the most exclusive of all ; and the Academy set, which is bound to the republic by administrative and official ties, but has monarchical leanings. The combination of these three makes up the smart set of Paris, though the Academy is, socially speaking, so mixed that, were it not for the membership and predominating influence of certain aristocrats who cling pathetically to this institution as the last shred of officialdom within their grasp in the democratic state, Academicians would not be admitted as freely as they are to the fashionable circles.

In these three sets, Americans, and more particularly American women, play a prominent part. Their influence is considerable, and, if they do not actually lead as in England, the cause is independent of themselves. The diffi-

culties presented by a foreign language constitute a primary obstacle, though it is noticeable that no foreigners speak French (with the sole exception, perhaps, of the Russians) with so little accent and in so natural a manner as American women. Then there is the religious question. In the smart set of Paris there are Catholics and many Jews, but the Protestants could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Protestantism does not, at least in the case of foreigners, exclude from the smart set ; but those who hold its tenets are naturally on a basis of inferiority, so far as leadership is concerned, with regard to a class whose social and political traditions are so intimately bound up with the profession, if not with the practice, of their religion. The Paris Upper Ten class Protestants with Jews, and tolerate their society solely on account of their money. Undoubtedly, not a few brilliant American men and women are to be met with in the highest Paris circles whose moral and intellectual influence on their environment is real and active, but it is above all individual. In London the American Colony has in a measure transformed the very basis upon which the social structure is built up. This is not the case in Paris. Obviously, a dispossessed and somewhat discredited aristocracy, without a

head, such as that in France, is instinctively opposed to innovation or reform. Otherwise its last shadow of prestige and claim on existence would disappear.

Quite a number of eminent statesmen and influential public men in France have American wives. But in this country women do not address political meetings. They do not canvass for their husbands at Parliamentary elections as in England. They do not lay foundation-stones or open hospitals. At most they may preside at the baptizing of a new battleship. Yet in some important ways the influence of women in France is greater than in America or England. It is very difficult to get a Frenchman to look at any scheme, whether of a commercial or a political nature, until he has consulted his wife. It is the wife's opinion that prevails nine times out of ten. In public affairs, therefore, the Frenchman's American wife remains in the *coulisses*, behind the scenes, but nowhere more successfully than in France do women pull the wires.

Certainly the smart set of Paris owes much of its lively modernity to the American woman. She has taught her French sister the value of self-reliance. Brought up almost invariably in a convent, the aristocratic French girl acquired

no real knowledge of the world until after her marriage. A cruel measure of self-effacement was imposed upon her. Her sole business was to look pretty and to dress to perfection, and she would have been little better than a lay figure if her natural French gift of liveliness had not made her, as a rule, a delightful and witty talker. To-day she plays tennis and golf, shoots, fishes, and hunts; belongs, after her marriage, to a woman's club; and her emancipation is almost entirely due to the precept and example of her American women friends. Withal she has lost nothing of her pristine charm. On the contrary, the American woman has taught her to walk, and initiated her into mysteries of hygiene, which were a closed book to her before, thus enabling her to enhance and preserve her natural beauty. If her conversation was always brilliant and gay, it is now rendered the more entertaining by her increased stock of knowledge and ideas, and the widening of her worldly horizon.

It is as an intellectual and artistic centre that Paris most appeals to the American Colony. The great majority of the Americans who reside here for any length of time have a literary or artistic preoccupation of one kind or another. Even if they had none when they arrived, there



is that in the atmosphere of Paris which forces some such interest upon them sooner or later. Only the veriest dolt could remain insensible to the æsthetical magnetism of a city of which it has been truly said that it daily trembles and quakes with ideas, so volcanic is the core of its mentality. It is fair to assert that in the artistic domain the Americans have given as much as they have received. In the world of paint the American colony has for years past played a conspicuous rôle. It is in the main due to the American example, backed by the dollars of American picture-buyers, interested in new artistic formulas, that the rising generation of French painters has broken loose from the trammels of the old French academic school whose hard-and-fast doctrines were rapidly proving fatal to all individual development. Among foreign painters, recognized by the Frenchmen themselves as being of the first class, who reside permanently in Paris, by far the largest contingent is supplied by the Americans. The American art students, men and women, form an important element of the colony in point of view of numbers. They have their clubs, whose artistic entertainments count among the most brilliant and amusing in Paris ; they have their special art shows, where the State not infre-

quently makes purchases ; and they have introduced baseball into the public playground of the old Luxembourg Palace gardens. These are features which distinguish the American Colony in Paris from that of London or of any European capital. The art colony has its offshoots in the French provinces. At Giverny, in Normandy ; at Crécy, a medieval town in the Brie country, where the famous Brie cheese comes from ; at Pont-Aven, in Brittany ; at Auvers, where Corot painted his masterpieces ; at Nesles - la - Vallée, on the Oise, there are American art colonies, whose members live the simplest of simple lives in provincial inns, on the dining-room walls of which pictorial souvenirs of their sojourn are frequently to be seen. Some of these have aroused the cupidity of passing picture-dealers, but there is no instance on record of any of them having been sold. In the nature even of a French innkeeper there is a respectful sympathy for the artist, and an instinctive sense of etiquette in matters concerning art which would make such a transaction impossible. The Paris École des Beaux Arts in all its departments, but particularly that of architecture, attracts numerous students from the United States, and at no hour of the day can one pass along the old-fashioned streets which surround

the *École*, in the district which lies between the Louvre and Montparnasse, a veritable citadel of the American art colony, without hearing more American spoken than French.

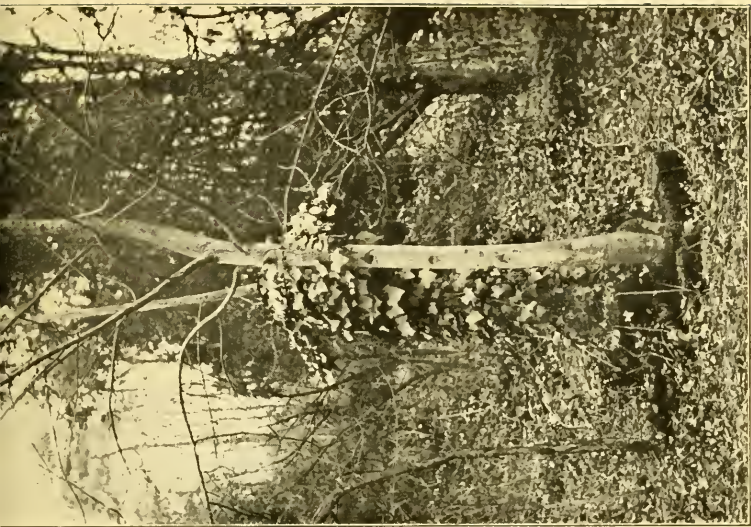
∖ The American resident in Paris bears a well-deserved reputation for rare courtliness of manners, a punctiliousness as concerns social etiquette which smacks of the *ancien régime*, and a large and tasteful hospitality. Rightly or wrongly, the Parisians saddle the Englishman with an accusation of bearishness and arrogance. No doubt the great majority of the Americans who visit or reside in Paris are *triés sur le volet*—in other words, are gentlemen of birth and breeding; while, naturally, the greater facilities of travel bring over a very different class of individual from London. One characteristic of the American Colony is its affection for the national flag. It may be safely said, without fear of contradiction, that no house, flat, or office, in Paris, tenanted by an American, is without “Old Glory” displayed somewhere. It may conspicuously drape an entire wall, or be merely a little object ornamenting a mantel-piece; but of whatever size it may be, or wherever it may be, sooner or later you will discover it.

As for the American visiting Europe, he may

be pleased with the beautiful uniformity of Berlin, or prefer the total lack of uniformity which is the chief charm of London, but it is only in Paris that he is fully at home. The gaiety and good-humour which he brings with him from America find the readiest response from the Parisians. Their wit is of the same subtle and light-feathered quality as his own. Their women resemble his in beauty, elegance, and esprit. His palate fully appreciates the delicacy of their choicest wines. He sees eye to eye with them on most subjects—political, social, or artistic. When the good American dies he goes to Paris, in which fact there is a backhanded but well-justified compliment to the American Colony.



A DESERTED GRAVE IN THE OLD BOIS DE  
BOULOGNE CEMETERY



THE BROKEN CROSS IN THE OLD BOIS DE  
BOULOGNE CEMETERY



## CHAPTER XI

### THE SHADOWS OF PARIS

“AND above all be careful of your planes!” This was, according to M. Félix Bracquemond, a pupil of a pupil of Ingres, the supreme dictum of the great classical French painter. Drawing, taught Ingres, is merely an indication of the luminous and sombre masses, and of the classified light, which determine the values of the objects to be represented.

The luminous and sombre masses, the shadows of this great capital, whose history covers so many hundreds of years, are instinct with delicate suggestions, with subtle lessons. Every city has the shadows that it deserves, the shadows that it makes for itself, just as the deeds of men and women colour and model their lives. The Old World and the New have their characteristic shadows—shadow-marks as full of significance, if not as tangible, as landmarks. In respect of its shadows, London differs no less from New York than Bruges from Pittsburg,

though the contrast may not be so striking. New shadows, varying in sharpness and intensity, are cast by new events, new people, new buildings ; and the old shadows linger even when that which gave them birth has long passed away, enveloping in a ghostly atmosphere the impalpable spirit-world in which we live with our ancestors. Not even the levelling of a house or a street can banish the old shadows altogether, can exorcise them wholly. Their immaterial presence still clings to the sites of razed cities and abandoned temples. They are, as it were, "earth-bound" for generations ; and when at last they take their leave, Time has indeed made a complete revolution, and so troubling have been their reproachful or merely reminiscent whisperings, their evocative note becomes so penetrating and acute by its mere attenuation, as change follows change, that our coarser natures not infrequently hail their departure with something like a feeling of relief. Shadows are the better half of history.

Modern Paris is statuesque. She poses, a magnificent stone statue ; and, generally speaking, her shadow is soft and blue, of great depth under an appearance of lightness. Her features are classical, her look and bearing imperial ; but wars and revolutions, the passions of love and



hate, have left deep lines upon her face and furrows upon her brow, which, if examined singly, may appear harshly sceptical, cruelly ironical, bitter or sad, but they do not destroy the antique nobility or the intellectual serenity of the expression as a whole. The mask of Napoleon with the smile of Voltaire! The beauty of the bust is heightened, not marred, by its patina.

The old shadows commingle and contrast with the new. The sharply-cut, new-thrown shadows of tall twentieth-century mansions seem all the harsher and colder when they come in contact with the warm if dingy tones of some such quaint relic of pre-Revolutionary days as that little old patched and red-tiled wine-shop on the Quai de Passy, with its ragged festoons of ancient ivy still clinging to its roof, and all around it the stone-faced apartment-houses of the wealthy—a company of modern millionaires gazing in horror at a mummified *sans-culotte*. Then to go back to almost prehistoric times, to the brick and marble period of the Roman occupation, we have mystical shadows such as fall in deep amber and russet folds from the broken walls which now surround the Cluny Museum, and at different epochs have encircled a Roman bath and a Carlovingian abbey. The

Middle Ages still contribute their share to the shadows of Paris, notably on the quays, where the cross-hatching of the long fishing-rods bending over the swirling Seine from the embankments and the river-shore give to the black and white of city, Seine, and sky, a quality and tone which you may look for in vain outside of a Callot etching. And, with their medieval dignity unimpaired by inheritance, the successors—themselves centenarians—of these ancient trees, whose roots ages ago were bathed by the Seine waters, turn aside from the surging life behind them, indifferent to the human bustle, as if nothing worthy of the notice of a tall and noble poplar had been or ever could be going on. The river breeze, with its song and cajolery, its eternal caress, is still their one playfellow—*leur seul amour* ! And their deep greens and shaggy masses of branch and foliage are those of the old French “verdure” tapestries, spun in homely wool by high-coiffed maidens and leather-jerkined youths long before the Gobelin looms, with their silk and gold threads, were set up in rivalry. Also of medieval shadow are the sugar-loaf turrets of the Palais de Justice which overlook these same Seine banks, recalling the steel-peaked caps and spiked armour of the feudal *gardiens de la paix*, grim and iron-handed

sentinels over virtue. Here, indeed, is the antique shadow of the law. And hard by at Notre Dame, in deep shrouds of serene obscurity, tremulous with divine harmonies and perfumed with immemorial incense, from hundreds of saint-burdened niches, from the intricate tracery of the great rose-windows with their wheeling kaleidoscopes of painted glass, from the fluted pillars rising in pure jets of stone to dimmer and dimmer heights, from the roof of the vast nave poised like a moth on wings of Gothic lace, from the two mighty towers lifting their skeleton arms to heaven, falls the Shadow of the Church. From nowhere can the shadows of Paris be better observed than from the North Tower of Notre Dame on a sunlit afternoon, with, for preference, big bellying white clouds driving across the blue sky—immediately beneath you the myriad convolutions of the old Island City, through whose archaic streets, as through a brain (to quote the subtle poet of “The City of the Soul”), “men creep like thoughts”; farther away, the serried ranks of those chestnut groves, lit up in spring by their lamp-like cones of bloom, which Napoleon I. planted as a guard to the ancient splendours of the Luxembourg; farther to the left, the “brooding brow” of the Panthéon, the seventeenth-century mag-

nificence of the two round towers of Saint-Sulpice, crowning the classical and reposeful lines of that vast Louis Quinze pile like the curls of a monumental peruke of the period ; then along the white Seine, with its score of sparkling bridges like so many rings on the white fingers of a Queen, to the blue and black and grey of succeeding divisions of the city, bluer as the eye reaches the more distant and modern quarters, to the Paris as yet unbuilt that lies bare and formless—*terrains vagues*—outside the fortifications, and beyond to the misty purple horizons and the wooded summits of Bellevue, Meudon, Saint-Cloud, and Versailles. From laughing youth to extreme old age, in all its moods grave and gay, the life-story of the great city lies before you, and at your side the “Penseur,” that sphinx-hearted gargoyle of Notre Dame, which, in imagination at least, has gazed out since the Middle Ages upon the slowly-changing scene, and watched its multitudinous and multicoloured shadows with the prophetic mystery in its eyes and grim humour on its lips, thinks your thoughts and dreams your dreams ; for in the direct line of its vision rises up the Eiffel Tower, menacing symbol of a world yet to be born, monstrous finger-post of progress.

Not less suggestive than the shadows of the



EARLY MORNING SHADOWS IN THE RED MILL QUARTER



THE MEDIEVAL SHADOWS OF THE CONCIERGERIE



Paris that dreams are the shadows of the Paris that thinks and works, and of the Paris that plays.

In the Luxembourg quarter, where the aristocracy of intellect expands the edifying influence of its grave presence, the shadows have a quality of their own, born of their environment, and determining it. Take any of its old streets—say the Rue Cassette. Owing to the solemn companionship of Saint-Sulpice, a stone's-throw away, and the aristocratic survival in its midst of the Hôtel d'Hinnisdal, now the Catholic Institute, but until recently the town mansion of one of those great French families that have preserved intact their religious and social traditions, the Rue Cassette wears an outward air of pious contemplation, a mask of spiritual decorum, the sedate livery, as it were, of a domestic of the upper clergy. Mainly composed of old-fashioned printing-houses, including that of the Archiepiscopate of Paris, no family Bible was ever bound in more mournful black or roan. Across the strait-laced façades of its whitey-brown walls the shadows fall narrow like black stoles. Two moribund monarchist and clerical organs issue daily from its presses. Look at those high-pointed cobblestones which constitute its *pavé*, its "metal"—resounding,

too, like metal to the horses' hoofs and the wheels of passing vehicles. Note the delicate dark grey shadows which surround them at their base, growing less as the road gradually sinks to the curbstone on either side. By their constant ripple they suggest a babbling brook. The heightening of the dark grey shadows of these old-fashioned cobbles teaches you the meaning of that idiomatic expression *le haut du pavé*. That part of the old Paris thoroughfare, before the introduction of *trottoirs*, or paved sidewalks, which was farthest away from the gutter, and therefore at the highest level, was the *haut du pavé*, a favoured position, to hold which was the privilege of wealth and rank. In those days the gutters ran through the middle of the street, and the *haut du pavé* was nearest to the wall, where the sidewalks now are. A few old thoroughfares paved in this way are still to be seen in Paris, notably the Rue Berton in the sixteenth arrondissement, and the Cour du Dragon at the corner of the Rue de Rennes. And though it is no longer permitted to the insolent lackeys of great nobles to push mere citizens into the gutters of these narrow streets, a certain aristocratic air still pertains to them by reason of these humble stones which yielded every prerogative to the "carriage folk," and



nothing to the pedestrian. In the Rue Cassette the *haut du pavé* is now in the middle, two little strips of sidewalk having been added on either side ; but the cobbles are of the ancient shape, which for three centuries has not been modified, and their shadows are the same. Shaded in summer by trees, the tops only of which are visible above high walls that once surrounded extensive gardens, streets of the type of the Rue Cassette, equally sedate, erudite, and contemplative, are common enough on the left bank in the neighbourhood of Saint-Sulpice and in the University quarter. At most times of the day a subdued and harmonious illumination fills them, spreading over their surface a kind of rich atmospheric varnish, such as was used by the old masters, banishing all crudities of light and shade ; the very sunshine seems to reach these solemn alleys through a patine or veil, which exists perhaps only in our imaginations, but is suggested by the elderly spirit of the place, its almost silenced echoes. In any case the impression is there, and if so many of the dealers in old furniture and bric-à-brac have opened shop in the Rue de Rennes, which is a kind of highway through this old-world quarter, but yet so far from the track beaten by most English and American tourists, it must be

that here are constant atmospheric qualities peculiarly precious to them, and that the background, or rather the circumambience of grey-green wall, with the ancient boughs of chestnut-trees floating above, and the rich stippling of the cobbled roads, is just what is needed to show off their faded treasures to the fullest advantage. Certainly the exorbitant prices which they charge would amply justify this supposition.

Here also the shadows of the human face tend to accentuate particular lines and develop typical expressions. In both look and dress, the Parisian who belongs as a native to these regions would present an unusual, if not eccentric, appearance in any other part of the world. He is both graver and greyer than the inhabitant of the right bank of the Seine. It is here that the *bord-plat*, the "stovepipe" hat with the flat and somewhat downward-slanting brim, forms part of the local dress, and the *tromblon*, or blunderbuss, of half a century ago, that wobbly revolutionary infant of the Imperial beaver, is still to be seen, though its proportions, lessening with succeeding generations, only just suffice to indicate a true but diminutive descendant of the giants. Fashion moves slowly in this neighbourhood, where

plodding work and unostentatious comfort, proud characteristics of a highly cultivated bourgeoisie, are the order of the day. The frock-coat is constantly worn, and is long and ample in the skirts ; trousers disdain the pressed median line ; the brown boot is rare ; patent leather and the pointed toe are rarer still ; the elegancies are subdued, though real. The swallowtail coat, together with an elaborately pleated white shirt-front, is still *de rigueur* at marriages, at funerals, and on all occasions of official ceremony ; and these old-fashioned pleatings seem to be imitated or repeated in the thousands of white-slatted shutters that enframe the windows of all but the most modern houses, and give to them a fresh and dignified air of being always in clean linen. There is a provincialism, too, in this well-laundered look which has its charm. There are streets in this working and thinking quarter of Paris which have all the appearance of respectable public notaries, such as, for instance, the Rue de Fleurus, with the Luxembourg Garden as its vernal background. The older and smaller and darker streets take us back to earlier epochs of fashion, before Brummell had invented the clean collar, to the days of laced ruffles of such delicate cambric that they shunned a too frequent

starching, and remained beautiful, but yellow ; and there are quite poor streets where poets and students live, whose dilapidated shutters are nearly black.

That the left bank of the Seine monopolizes all that is treasurable in the ancient harmonies of line and shadow that enfold the heart and history of Paris is a popular error, but that the right bank is, on the whole, junior to the left cannot be denied, though, with eternity before us, the past is in a sense ageless. As Burger says : " Hin ist Hin !" But that the right bank is entirely distinguished from the left by the diversity of its shadows is perfectly true. In the zone of the comparatively new houses of which the Opéra is the centre, the shadows, owing to the prevalence of fresh stone, are harder and bluer ; the wide streets, the broader pavements, leave a freer inlet to air and sun ; the planes are fewer, and the backgrounds have a relative absence of chiaroscuro. Where a bright and burning sun can play with unbroken rays upon such massive walls as those of the Madeleine and the Bourse, with their colonnades in pure Greek style, we have shadows so clear-cut and of such a rich deep blue as to transport us in imagination to those rugged and stony landscapes of the Midi and the Mediterranean, where, to quote a

recent outburst of M. Jules Jaurès, the sun shines with such force upon the bare rocks that the birds as they wing past *se dedoublent* (double themselves) as in a mirror. There are no such luminous effects as these on the left bank, where the bluest shadows are in the outlying and artisan quarters, but are as hard, dreary, and cold, as the lives of the toiling folk who dwell there. The Chamber of Deputies and the official buildings that are in line with it, the palace of the President of the Chamber, and of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, forming an architectural sequence to the Bridge and the Place de la Concorde, the Madeleine, and the Rue Royale, although actually on the left bank, belong, by the nature of their shadows and planes, to the right bank. They speak its language and obey its customs. The zone of the right bank extends as far as the Faubourg Saint-Germain to the south, and to the Pont des Arts on the east. Its line of demarcation literally cuts in two the Chamber of Deputies, of which the façade opposite the Seine is a Parliamentary incrustation upon the more ancient town residence of the Duchesse de Bourbon, the real front of which looks towards the Faubourg Saint-Germain, and is of the left bank proper. Such overlapping is inevitable in a city where centralizing tendencies

are constantly on the increase, whose administrative maw is ever opening wider ; but in all other respects the left bank remains intact without any influence from the right to seriously affect its intimate spirit, and the right continues its development towards the west and north, multiplying streets of classic line, which with their tree borders are merely green and white in summer, or white and grey-black in winter. Then, after a lengthy stroll, we reach the nineteenth-century splendour, the real if somewhat insipid beauty of that vast avenue leading to the Bois de Boulogne, with its plethora of florid brick and decorated stone and blue slate, recalling the rigid domestic propriety, the flounced crinolines and shot silks of the mid-Victorian era, which was once named, and in point of shadow and souvenir still is, the Avenue of the Empress. We have passed through the Ministerial and Ambassadorial suburbs, neat and patched with gilt like a diplomatic uniform ; we have left behind us that other section of Paris that thinks and works.

To the west, but farther to the north, lies a vast and seething quarter, of all periods and of none, whose streets are populous and squalid, or so solitary and silent as to appear to be hushing up a crime ; but they have this in com-

mon, that their shadows are, as it were, deaf and dumb, without receptivity or power of expression, being, indeed, merely shadows of shadows—shadows of scenes which are dormant during the day, and whose echoes are for the moment mute. This is the so-called European Quarter, and it is here that Paris plays—a quarter that gets up very late in the morning, in a state of somnolent frowsiness, pallid, and not over-tidy, the dejection of *mal aux cheveux*, or *katzenjammer*, visible upon its tired face, in its sordid deshabelle. Those eyes of a street which are its windows remain in the European Quarter, or at least with respect to most of its dwelling tenements, sleepily closed till noon, and in some cases for the whole of the day, only opening at supper-time, when the rattle of cabs and carriages and automobiles on the cobbled pavements below announce that the nocturnal pandemonium of Montmartre and Clichy and Rochechouart, of the Place Blanche, the Place Pigalle, and the Rue Notre Dame de Lorette, is once more in full swing. Then the Paris that plays becurtains and bemantles itself in vast masses of shadow, the depth and concealing powers of which are intensified and added to by the brilliance of the illumination which streams from cafés and restaurants and the façades of

music-halls and dancing-saloons, from a thousand and one dens of delirium and doubtful delight. Draped in these fantastic shadows, the circular Place Clichy and Place Pigalle, with their flaring all-night houses, the Abbaye de Thélème, the Rat Mort, or Dead Rat, the Nouvelle Athènes, or New Athens (save the mark!), resemble huge merry-go-rounds, invaded by madmen and madwomen. The whole European Quarter turns itself into a roaring Vanity Fair; and when at last the frantic scene is over, its black masses of shadow, of which the blazing sails of the Red Mill are perhaps the most notable luminous foyer, gradually fade into relative nothingness, and powerless now to hide the red-handed Apache, or "Thug," from the belated reveller, his unsuspecting prey, having lost all character, or *raison d'être* as shadows of Paris that plays, as shadows of evil or shadows of death, they flee the daylight, what time a pale sunbeam creeps along the balconies of the Rue de Clichy like some shameful yellow cat climbing furtively home at dawn after a night's debauch upon the tiles.





THE SEINE BANKS, WITH NOTRE DAME IN THE DISTANCE, AND ANGLERS



## CHAPTER XII

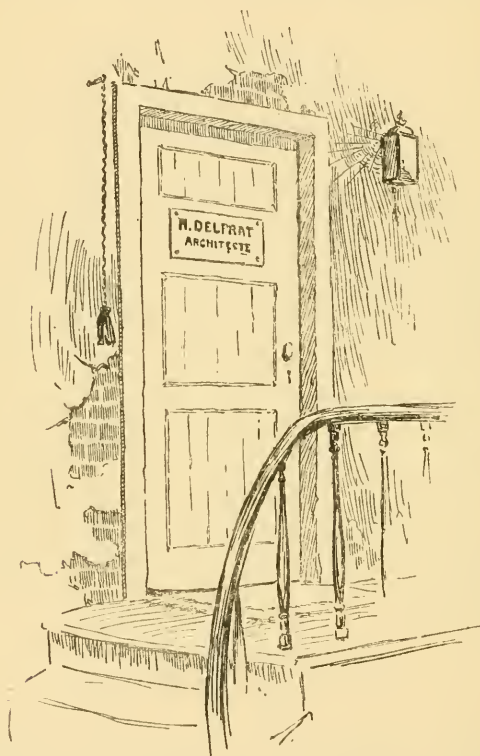
### A PARISIAN HOLIDAY-MAKING

IF you enter No. 8, Rue Maubeuge, an uphill, unimpressive, but busy street in Paris, which connects as with a long tube the "quarter" of the Opéra with that of the Northern Railway Station; if you pass up the dingily carpeted staircase to the fourth-floor (there is no lift in the house, which is still lit with gas), you will find yourself standing on a worn mat in front of an oak-stained door, affixed to which is a well-polished brass plate, with the words engraved on it :

M. ADOLPHE DELPRAT,  
ARCHITECTE.

Monsieur Delprat is a Parisian of the type known as the *bon bourgeois*, or respectable citizen of moderate means. So his flat is composed of only four *pièces*, or living-rooms — namely, a dining-room and a sitting-room, which look out on to the street, and two *chambres*, or bedrooms,

which receive their light from the courtyard at the back of the house. It has, moreover, an "entrance," which to the uninitiated mind might seem even more indispensable than the



YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF STANDING ON A WORN MAT.

staircase. But in Paris houses an *entrée* means an entrance-hall, often little more, as in the present case, than a narrow corridor, in which it is just possible to place a hat-rack and an un-

rella-stand. There is also a diminutive room which Monsieur Delprat uses as an office, having filled it with a wooden board on trestles, and two cane-bottomed chairs. Architect's instruments and plans strew the wooden board. Then there is a kitchen exactly a yard and a half square, and on the sixth-floor is a *chambre de bonne* the same size as the kitchen, which is the bedroom of Monsieur Delprat's one domestic servant, a *bonne à toutes mains*, who works steadily fourteen hours a day in return for thirty shillings a month wages, with lodging, board, and washing. Monsieur Delprat pays two thousand francs (£80) a year for his flat, including fifty francs (£2) for the *chambre de bonne*, and it is now ten years that he has lived in it with his wife, one daughter, and a son. He and his wife occupy one of the bedrooms, his daughter the other, and the son sleeps in the dining-room on a folding-bed, which during the daytime is disguised as a sofa. Madame Delprat is from Bordeaux. She has the Bordelais features, round and classical, somewhat full, with black hair and dark eyes, and she has something of the Bordelais languor. Her daughter, Madeleine, is now seventeen, a tall fair girl with dark eyes, livelier than her mother. The son, Louis, is fifteen, and an *externe*, or dayboy, at the

neighbouring Collège Chaptal. He is thin, sallow, angular, and talks with lightning volubility. His sister teases, bullies and caresses him in turn. He treats her as a kind of being apart, whose ideas are necessarily outside the sphere of reason. She revenges herself by passing criticisms on his occupations, and getting him into scrapes with his father. His constant retort is : "Thou art a girl. Thou understandest nothing *therein!*" He bears no malice, and keeps up such an incessant chatter about photography, postage-stamps, school politics, and the invention of a new flying-machine, that the sarcasms of Madeleine have exactly the same effect upon him as have the midgets and flies with which a chauffeur comes into stinging collision when whirling along at the rate of sixty miles an hour. His father "destines him for commerce," but his secret intention is to be an airman. There are thousands of Parisian boys like Louis, leading identically the same lives, just as there are thousands of Parisian girls cut to the same pattern as is Madeleine, vivacious, active young creatures, revelling in the simple pleasures of their little world.

Monsieur Delprat is tall, lanky, with an immense shock of reddish-brown hair and a big reddish beard. His expression is one of con-

stant amazement, which is ready at any moment to develop into indignation. Some of his friends describe him as a *hurluberlu*, others as a *ahuri*, and both words characterize him well enough. His mind is mostly in a state of hurly-burly. The *ahuri* is the chronically flabbergasted man.

It is wonderful how many *ahuris* there are among French architects of the less prosperous kind. Can it be that architecture, more than any other art, fosters the grain of insanity inseparable from genius? Monsieur Delprat would not accuse you of exaggerating if you were to describe him as a genius, but nonetheless he has been obliged, in order to earn a living, to limit his architectural activity almost exclusively to the *gérance*, or management of apartment houses ; in other words, he is a landlord's agent. This *raté*, or half-failure of a man, is, without knowing it, one of the happiest of human beings, for, like all disappointed people, he has the whole field of criticism open to him, and his excursions across it are frequent and varied. He is a frantic politician, opposed to any government for the time being, and is a fervent antisemite. To listen to him, France is the most hopeless, helpless, and ill-governed of countries. He is constantly holding up to her the examples of America and England, where

he has never set foot. "Ah," he says, "how differently the English would have managed that! In America, my dear sir, it is impossible for such things to happen. In England or America the law enforces this, or the nation insists upon that." England and America would be very odd places indeed if Adolphe Delprat's Utopian descriptions of their customs and laws bore any resemblance to the truth.

With the interest of his wife's *dot*, Monsieur Delprat's income is £480 a year, of which he manages to put by about £20, and to have £30 to spare for an annual fortnight's outing with his family to the seaside. Every summer the question where they shall go is debated with fervour by the Delprat family.

Already in the middle of June the street hoardings in Paris are covered with advertisements of rural and seaside resorts. Le Tréport, on the Norman border, is personified by a charming girl, with yellow hair, tripping back from her dip in the sea. At Sables d'Olonne, in Brittany, a pretty Breton peasant-woman is represented in national costume, sitting in the shrouds of a sailing-ship. To Jean Veber, the illustrious caricaturist, is due a fantastic depiction of the Hôtel de la Forêt at Fontainebleau, where, so the public is informed, there is neither



“casino, theatre, nor tziganes,” but, in place of them, “urbanity, good cooking, and French comfort.” In the foreground of Monsieur Veber’s composition, in which the gnarled oaks have foliage which resembles clouds of blond smoke,



THE STREET HOARDINGS ARE COVERED WITH ADVERTISEMENTS OF SEASIDE RESORTS.

a bandy-legged landlord is opening wide his arms to a number of little fat dwarfs who have arrived in an automobile apparently carved out of a pumpkin. In a highly-coloured plan, Sainte-Adresse, “the Nice-Havrais,” a watering-place

entirely built and owned by the millionaire proprietor of a vast emporium at Montmartre, looks, with its perfectly straight streets, rising tier upon tier in front of a very blue sea, covered with strange craft, like an agglomeration of doll's-houses. But it has the spick-and-span neatness and newness which appeal to most middle-class Parisians. On another poster, an elderly Parisian, with white eyebrows, spectacles poised on the tip of his nose, and a huge pointed straw hat, sits, bare-armed and bare-legged, in a punt lazily fishing. This scene is laid at Vaires, on the Marne, at twenty kilometres' distance from Paris. At Cabourg, where the main attractions are "a new kursaal, golfing, lawn-tennis, and yachting," two unusually stout ladies are figured in the water, bathing and splashing each other, one in a black, the other in a red costume. The artist in this case is plainly an impressionist.

Louis Delprat is describing these posters in his voluble way at the dinner-table, when his father, letting the ladle fall into the soup with a splash, exclaims: "Cabourg! But thou art mad, my poor child! Thou thinkest not *therein!* Everything at Cabourg costs the eyes of the head. It is the most expensive place in France, and, besides, chock-full of Jews. Thou wouldst not

that thy father should thither go." Furthermore, says Monsieur Delprat, Cabourg is so crowded with automobiles that all the roads around it are quite unsafe for people on foot. Naturally, in a democratic country like France, it suffices to be rich enough to possess a motor-car to have the right to endanger human lives with impunity. Now, in America or England such a thing would not be tolerated for a moment. "Oh, bother England and America!" interposes Madeleine undutifully. "Why not go to Trouville? I am sick of the *petits trous pas chers* (the inexpensive little holes) which you and mother are so fond of. They are just as dear in the long-run." But her father, after begging her to be calm and reasonable, maintains that during the very brief season at Trouville everything is abominably dear and proportionately bad to an even greater degree than at Cabourg, and that there is nothing more mortally dull than a fashionable resort when the season is over. The chief charm of Trouville, the lovely winding road along the coast to the mouth of the Seine at Honfleur, called the "Corniche Normande," because it is, if anything, more beautiful than the famous "Route de la Corniche" at Cannes, has also been spoilt by innumerable automobiles driven at frantic speed

by arrogant and cosmopolitan parvenus. Villerville, between Trouville and Honfleur, is far prettier, and, though cheaper, attracts a better class of visitor. "I know one delightful inn there," says Monsieur Delprat, "the Hôtel des Parisiens—embowered in roses and honeysuckle, where the *pension*, including the room, does not exceed eight shillings a day. Villerville, moreover, has an ancient fame for its mussels, and, as you know very well, your poor father adores mussels, which is, I suppose, the reason why Madame Delprat never dreams of having them on the table."

Indolent Madame Delprat, who helps in the kitchen, hates mussels because they take so long to clean, but she answers: "I am so dreadfully afraid of them." "Bah!" murmurs her husband. He admits, however, that the bathing at Villerville is poor, owing to mud deposits from the Seine. Even at Trouville the water is more brackish than salt, and it is only at Deauville, Trouville's aristocratic suburb, that you come to the real sea. But Deauville is one of the many places where it is a rule in the hotels to dress for dinner, and this Monsieur Delprat resolutely refuses to do. "I agree," he says, "with Whistler, the great American painter (ah, there was an artist!) who said

one might just as well dress to sit in an omnibus as go dressed to a *table d'hôte*." For this reason Étretat is barred, though greatly frequented by Americans and English; but it is strait-laced and formal, and too much uphill for Madame Delprat, who hates walking. As for Sainte-Adresse, Monsieur Delprat trusts that his children will kindly remember that their father is an architect of some distinction, who, but for the notoriety of his political opinions, would long ago have been created a Knight of the Legion of Honour, and that they will therefore have sufficient respect for him not even to mention Sainte-Adresse in his hearing. Only in a country on the eve of collapse would such an architectural abomination have been permitted. Boulogne is pestered by the cheapest class of Saturday to Monday excursionists, and Monsieur Delprat can never forget spending twelve mortal hours on a hundred-mile excursion to the sea in the company of his late maiden aunt. She had taken her canary-bird with her so that it also might benefit from the sea-air! It died the next day from nervous exhaustion, and Monsieur Delprat was subsequently omitted from his aunt's will. Dieppe attracts Madeleine on account of its casino, with the "little horses" (for both she and her mother are fond of a

cheap gamble); but Monsieur Delprat, while recognizing that the daily spectacle of the British passengers arriving from Newhaven is morally invigorating, objects to the dirtiness and narrowness of the Dieppe streets, the inferiority of the cuisine in the Dieppe hotels, and to the lack of shade on the promenades. Besides, the beach is pebbly. Le Tréport has an evil-smelling harbour. Vaires, he insists, is far more to his liking than any seaside place. "I don't know," he argues, "why you should all be so mad on spending your holiday by the sea. There is no rest to be got there. The sea is always making a noise. It rants, roars, screams, and whistles, and is never still for a minute." Madeleine exchanges a look with her mother. Vaires, according to Monsieur Delprat, is far more the typical *villégiature*, or holiday resort, of the real Parisian. He grows sentimental over the recollection of his boyhood's vacations spent on the banks of the green and crystal-clear Marne. Joinville-le-Pont, Nogent-sur-Marne, Le Perreux, were then at the height of their glory—places fallen now, owing to the outspread of Paris, which has practically swallowed them up, to the general preference for the seaside, and the passion for long distances which came in with the bicycle and the auto-

mobile. But, oh, the joys of the little riverside *pavillon*, or cottage, with its big garden filled with flowers and vegetables and fruit-trees, *en plein rapport*, with laden branches. It was but a cab-drive to get there! No need of railways. Boating, fishing, and bathing, were the day-long amusements. The boats would be called "tubs" nowadays, but you could "do" the *tour de la Marne* with them, that adorably picturesque loop which the Marne makes at its junction with the Seine, and some adventurous spirits had even rowed in them as far as Meaux. What *fritures* of gudgeon and roach were caught! And the bathing in the river—hundreds of pretty Parisiennes jumping in and out of the water from the vast bathing pontoons. Their laughter could be heard almost as far as Paris. But all this is now a thing of the past. Even the pontoons have been removed, and the little Parisiennes have gone farther afield; in fact, Paris-Plage is now about the nearest place where you are likely to find them. But Paris-Plage is a bit too democratic for Madame Delprat and Madeleine. It is there that you are sure to meet your concierge, and the grocer and his family from the corner of the street, conditions incompatible with "a thorough change." Veules-les-Roses, close to Valéry in

the Norman Caux country, has a romantic name which appeals to Madeleine's imagination, but her father holds that its former unsophisticated charms are on the decline, that its roses have withered, and, moreover, the shadow of the swallow-tail coat (Monsieur Delprat uses the expression *queue de morue*, or "cod-tail") has fallen on its *tables d'hôte*. Clearly, the choice for the Delprats lies between the coasts of Normandy and Brittany. Louis does not care where they go, as long as the roads are fit for bicycling and he can fly a kite on the seashore. In Brittany prices rule lower than in Normandy, and the scenery, if not so pretty, is more varied; but, the distances being greater, the travelling expenses are double or treble. Monsieur Delprat proposes to study the special conditions for "collective family tickets" on the Northern line, and sends Louis for the latest "Chaix," or Official Railway Guide. His anger is excessive when he is referred in the ordinary "Chaix" to the "Illustrated Chaix Guide" for this particular information. "A trick to make you buy two books! Ah, France! France!" he mutters. But, from the data supplied by the other railway companies, he gathers that for the first three persons of a family party there is no reduction, but for every additional person



the price of the return ticket is the same as that of a single ticket. Two children aged from three to seven count as one person. The family is defined as consisting of father, mother, sons, daughters, father-in-law, mother-in-law, uncles, aunts, and domestic servants. By a special privilege the head of the family—and this, at least, says Monsieur Delprat, is an intelligent arrangement—may return *alone* to his point of departure. In Paris and some of the larger French towns the collective family ticket must be applied for half an hour before the train starts, but three hours beforehand is the limit at all other stations. A similar rule applies to the *voiture à galerie*, or cab, with a roof railed in to secure the baggage. It transports the family from any address in Paris to or from the station, and is supplied by the railway companies for two francs fifty centimes, or two shillings. It must be ordered at least six hours in advance, but if ordered earlier an additional fee of one franc is charged. Monsieur Delprat expresses the utmost contempt for these *chinoiseries* (*chineseries*), as he calls them. The same ridiculous system prevails in the French theatres, where you pay more for your tickets if you buy them in advance, when reasonably you ought, in the circumstance, to pay less.

It is not until some days after this inconclusive debate at the dinner-table that the Delprats finally decide to spend the holidays at Fort-Mahon, a new seaside place on the Northern line halfway between Saint-Valéry and Berck. Saint-Valéry itself they hold to be too near the mouth of the Somme, while Berck is objectionably full of little consumptive patients belonging to a local sanatorium. From a neatly-printed booklet, illustrated with photographs, and sent to him by the Initiative Committee of Fort-Mahon—an act of enterprise to which he approvingly attributes an American inspiration—Monsieur Delprat discovers that the proprietor of the principal hotel there is an old schoolmate, from whom he can, therefore, expect a specially hospitable welcome. Fort-Mahon is the nearest sand-beach to Paris, whence it can be reached in three hours. It is a family place. Madame Delprat will be able to spend all her days lolling in a *cabane*, or little summer-house, built of planks, on the sand, and facing the sea. The hire of one of these diminutive constructions will not exceed twenty francs. Among the various amusements promised by the booklet is a kite competition, which will amuse Louis. Madeleine will have to do without a casino and “little horses,” but the Committee of Fêtes,

presided over by a real Marquis, seems to be a "live" corporation, and what with innumerable dances, photographic competitions, torchlight processions, musical festivals, rabbit-hunts, the Beach Fête on the first Sunday in August,



MADELINE IS NOW SEVENTEEN.

and the picturesque Benediction of the Sea, Madeleine will find ample scope for frolic and flirtation. The magnificent chapel of the Saint-Esprit, a gem of late Gothic architecture, in the neighbouring village of Rue, will supply Monsieur Delprat with an endless subject of

controversy with his neighbours at the *table d'hôte*. So the Delprats fix the day for their departure. Their "collective family ticket" costs them four pounds eight shillings. They pay an extra eight shillings for the registration of their excess baggage, and a desperate scene occurs between Monsieur Delprat and the baggage clerk, who has tried to pass off upon him a Spanish five-franc piece. At last, after a hot struggle through the crowds that are also leaving Paris for the holidays, the Delprats are safely seated in a second-class carriage, of which they occupy the four corners. Madame Delprat has already opened a packet of sandwiches, and is eating them, in spite of the fact that she breakfasted only an hour previously. She champions that ancient belief still widely spread in Europe, that, on any railway journey lasting more than an hour, it is imperative to take stringent precautions against suddenly dying from hunger *en route*. Monsieur Delprat is attracting more or less sympathetic attention from the six other people in the carriage by his violent denunciations of the French monetary system, apropos of his dispute with the baggage clerk, who, he swears, was a Jew. "In what other civilized country in the world," he asks, "is it permitted to circulate certain foreign

coins to the exclusion of certain others? An Italian five-franc piece is good, but a Spanish one you must refuse. If the figure of Helvetia on a Swiss coin is sitting down, you may accept it; if it is standing up, you mustn't; or, according



A DESPERATE SCENE OCCURS WITH THE  
BAGGAGE CLERK.

to some people, it is the other way round. Nobody seems to know. If Louis Philippe is crowned on a one-franc piece, well and good; if he's not crowned, then you've been swindled. Do you suppose that in America such folly

would be tolerated for an instant ?” And as a bilious-eyed listener volunteers a hesitating “ No,” Monsieur Delprat, emboldened, launches into a noisy demonstration of the general superiority of Anglo - Saxon institutions over those of France. He calls attention to the notice posted up in the carriage in French and English, “ Il est dangereux de se pencher en dehors ” (Dangerous to lean out), and shows his son Louis that it takes exactly eight words to say in French what can be said in English in four. He attacks the French judicial system as tending to bring about the miscarriage of justice, while the French marriage laws, he says, are responsible for the decline in the birth-rate, and actually encourage race suicide. His discourse is beginning to get on the nerves of his audience, and an explosion from Madeleine is imminent, when the ticket-collector, who is a wag, good-humoredly interrupts him with : “ Now, *Monsieur Roosevelt*—tickets please !”



THE "MUGUET" BRINGS LUCK



A HAWKER OF WILD HEATHER AT MONTMARTRE





## CHAPTER XIII

### THE VOICE OF PARIS

. . . Like banners, from those turrets old,  
Your bells shake forth their clouds of gold !  
Their voice is in the light and shade,  
The radiant gloom,  
Which bathe this Renaissance façade.  
It lingers in the dark cascade  
Of that green fountain-tomb,  
With black leaves spread,  
Where Polyphemus bends his head,  
| And all around  
This temple's domed and brooding brow,  
With laurel crowned,  
It wreathes the incense of its sound.  
It shrives the dying flowers, and now  
Chases the swallows out of sight,  
Rising and falling with their flight !

THUS a poet has described the chiming of the bells of Saint-Sulpice Church heard from the Luxembourg Gardens, with the ancient Renaissance Palace of the Luxembourg in front of him, and to the right Marie de Médicis' funereal fountain and the incomparable dome of the Panthéon. Nothing characterizes a city more than its noises. An American friend of mine

was driven away from Venice, which is said to be the quietest city in the world, by the noise of voices. With no horse traffic, no motor omnibuses, no electric tramways, to drown it with their din, the human voice acquires in Venice a resonance, a force of penetration, which it lacks in other centres of activity, so that conversation carried on between two people in a Venetian street, even in a low tone, is so acutely audible as to cause torture, if the ear upon which it persistently falls be at all delicate or sensitive. When Alphonse Daudet returned from his first and last visit to London, some ten or twelve years ago, he told me that what had struck him most was the silence of the London streets as compared with those of Paris. This impression was, he thought, mainly to be ascribed to the coldness and taciturnity of the English population. Perhaps if he were to be in London now he would have reason to modify his opinion. There is certainly more vocal noise in the streets of all the European capitals than there was a decade ago, and it is on the increase. The foreigners are more numerous, facilities for travel having so much developed, and it is the tendency of all foreigners to be vociferous when travelling. In London, particularly, the drifting population of French

visitors is ten times what it was at the beginning of the century, and their gesticulatory talkativeness violently contrasts with the monosyllabic stolidity of the natives. "Straight ahead!" says the London "bobby," if you ask him the way, or he may content himself with a mere jerk of the forefinger. "Mais nous n'avez qu'à poursuivre directement cette rue dans laquelle vous vous trouvez, monsieur, et vous verrez la maison en question au coin de la première rue à votre gauche." "Je vous remercie infiniment, monsieur." "Il n'a a pas de quoi, monsieur." Thus the French "agent," the policeman of Paris. Or he will carefully enumerate the streets that you must *not* take; and if he happens to wear upon his arm a tricolour band with the word "Interpreter" or "Dolmetscher" upon it, he will repeat his information in English or German with the same discursiveness.

Paris is eloquent. Above the multifarious noises of the street, which are of a mechanical origin, or may proceed from the brute creation, there constantly arises the wail of protestation, the yell of denunciatory wrath. Two Paris drivers collide with each other, or narrowly escape a collision. "Ours!" (Bear!) shouts one. "Fourneau!" (Fire - stove!) bellows

the other. If damage has been done, a policeman intervenes. He produces a pocket-book and a pencil, and takes down in longhand a verbatim report of the speeches on both sides. During the careful performance of this task a crowd collects. The debate becomes general. Two parties are formed. Orator vociferates against orator. The language is not always parliamentary, but, if a little surcharged with adjective, like the earlier efforts of the Romanticists, it is amazingly eloquent. At last the "agent" takes a platform—*il prend la parole*—and imposes silence with Speaker-like authority in a voice louder than anybody else's. His is at once a summing-up, a verdict, a passing of sentence, a Ministerial declaration. The crowd passes a vote of confidence in the Government by adjourning to the next street corner. For the time being, at any rate, a revolution has been averted.

Paris, in many of its districts, is built over the catacombs. These vast subterranean chambers and galleries produce that peculiar cavernous sound which is heard in the Luxembourg, Montparnasse, Vaugirard, Montrouge, and Montsouris quarters when heavy carts pass rapidly along the coarsely metalled roads. The streets are then like monstrous drums beating

funeral marches to the grave over that vast common grave of generations of Parisians, with its millions of skeleton dead. That quaint little Gothic house at the corner of the recently-prolonged Boulevard Raspail, which many an American artist must remember from his student days, actually has a private staircase leading to the catacombs from beneath a hermetically-closed stone slab just in front of the doorstep. From time to time certain municipal officials visit this grim entrance, the existence of which is known to only very few people. A former occupant of the house, surprised by one of these visits, the reason of which was mysterious to him, was accustomed to relate that once, in the dead of night, while he watched, quaking, from the room above, convinced that he was witnessing the final scene in some Borgia-like political tragedy, a party of men, the chief of whom wore half concealed under his coat the tricolour scarf of a police commissary, had conveyed a body through this entrance into the catacombs below. A few days later he was annoyed by a cadaverous smell rising through the boards of his dining-room floor. The nuisance was almost certainly attributable to a dead rat, but, to complete his discomfort, every morning at five o'clock an empty school

omnibus, belonging to the Collège Stanislas, passed through the narrow street on its way to pick up pupils, rousing the thunderous and sepulchral echoes of the catacombs with such vibratory effect as to give him alarming palpitations of the heart. Being a man of imaginative temperament, he decided to transfer his residence to the right bank of the Seine. He had also been much troubled by the noise of cats. Formerly he had lived on the skirts of Montmartre, and it was only when he had crossed the Seine to the left bank that he learned that Paris is divided, by those who know her intimately well, into the dog zone and the cat zone. He had entered the cat zone. He had penetrated to the very heart or citadel of it, for countless cats, evidently without homes, and in a wild state, rendered the days nervous and electric by their ceaseless squabbles, and the nights sleepless by their caterwauling. He had tried to entice them into his house, but they had been proof against all his persuasions. Evidently they were cats that had never tasted dairy milk or any Christian food. Pariahs, sleeping on house-roofs, under bridges, in the Luxembourg Gardens, where they not infrequently coil themselves up in the laps of the seated statues, haunting the many private

gardens for which the left bank is still noted, there is reason to believe that they are the wild descendants of the pet cats which were turned into the streets during the most sanguinary period of the Revolution. It was precisely these suburbs, with their ancient family mansions and convents, that suffered most from the dreadful visitations of the Comité de la Sûreté. Every day during the Terror some hapless family of aristocrats was dragged to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and, after a mock trial lasting a few moments, conveyed to the Place de la Nation for immediate execution.

It was here, on the left bank of the Seine, in the zone which comprises the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, the site of the Abbaye des Bois (just pulled down), the stately palaces of the Rue de Sèvres, the Rue de Vaugirard, the Rue Cassette, the Rue de Tournon, that Fouquier-Tinville, the tigrish public accuser of the Commune de Paris, selected his most distinguished and noble victims. Each devastated house contained, as a rule, a cat, which henceforward became an outcast and a wanderer, the servants having in many cases shared the fate of their masters and mistresses. If the domestic pet happened to be a dog, it was most probably destroyed, or it found a new master, but the cat is less adapt-

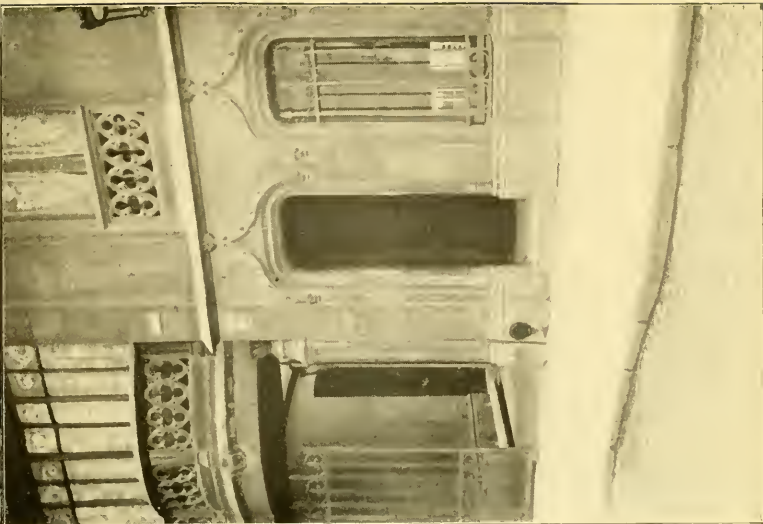
able to changed conditions. Like a Corsican bandit, but with the vendetta against all humanity in its heart, it took to the *maquis*, or "bush," as it were, afforded by the richly wooded parks and gardens, which at that period, and until some half-century ago, made the left bank of Paris famous throughout the world.

No doubt these cats subsisted chiefly on the rats which swarm in these parts, and it was to keep down this pest that they had been primarily employed. To-day the rats are still very numerous. Their presence in this neighbourhood is another cause of attraction to all the homeless cats of Paris, which, when they are not on a rat-hunt, fraternize or fight with the pet cats belonging to the numerous old maids, the quiet professors, the retired tradespeople, senators, literary men, and composers, who form the mainstay of its human population. At midnight the Boulevard Saint-Germain, the Boulevard Montparnasse, the Boulevard Saint-Michel, are alive with rats, gambolling round the trees which line the side-walks—rats of the big brown species, which years ago exterminated the old indigenous grey rat of Paris, fearless and familiar almost to the point of being tame. "What is that shrill squeaking which I hear around me?" asks the inexperienced visitor of





THE SPARROWS ARE TAME ENOUGH TO TAKE  
FOOD FROM THE HAND



THE HOUSE WITH A SECRET STAIRCASE INTO  
THE CATACOMBS



his Parisian friend as he sits in the summer on one of these boulevards sipping the nocturnal bock. "That, monsieur, is a rat which a cat has just caught. Look! don't you see the rats—dozens of them—popping in and out of the iron cages, shaped like crinolines, which protect the trunks of the trees?"

The vocal drawbacks of the cat and dog zones of Paris are serious, but they are relieved by more harmonious animal noises. In spite of the modernization of the left bank of the Seine, which has left little of the old verdure and wealth of ancient trees, the nightingale may still be heard on summer nights in the garden of the convent of Cistercian nuns in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs. The blackbird, the thrush, and the starling, make melodious the leafy glades and avenues of the Tuileries Gardens, and of the public parks at Buttes Chaumont, Monceau, and Montsouris. In all open spaces of Paris fat pigeons coo. They, and the sparrows, whose constant chorus of twittering is so loud sometimes as to be seriously interruptive of brain-work, are tame enough to take food from the hand, and flourish in such numbers that in the Luxembourg Gardens the flower-beds have to be protected from their depredations and wallowing propensities by thin copper netting.

Police regulations have been framed to protect the Parisian population from certain classes of noises, but they are not always heeded. Barrel-organs have been suppressed. The hideous barking of draught dogs, which is such a nuisance in Berlin and Brussels, is unknown in the French capital, where dogs may not be employed to pull carts. On the other hand, the police have found it impossible to prevent the cracking of whips. Though forbidden by a law, whip-cracking enters so instinctively into the character of the French driver, whether he be cabman or drayman, that, unless a definite complaint be lodged, there is no official interference. Humanitarians, moreover, contend that whip-cracking is in some measure a protection for the Parisian horse. It is a relief to the French driver's feelings, it is dramatic and eloquent, and, while serving to rouse a lethargic animal, does not cause him physical pain. This is a point that deserves to be brought home to the numerous kind-hearted English and Americans, principally ladies, who, when in Paris, demonstrate so vigorously against what they call the brutal whipping of the cab-horses.

The ringing of the church bells in Paris is permissible only with the consent of the Mayors in each municipal district, except on Sundays

and public holidays. In the Socialist districts it is reduced to a minimum. In the wealthier quarters one can form some idea of what Paris must have been in the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was celebrated above all cities in Europe, including even Rome, for its bell-ringing. This echo, faint as it is, has an indescribable charm.

It is a police regulation which obliges every cab with pneumatic tyres—and there are few now that are not so provided—to carry a jingling bell, which makes the approach of the cab distinctly audible on the noiseless asphalt. The ringing of bells enters largely into the orchestral composition of the Paris noises. Bicyclists jingle them, and on the gaily be-ribboned harness of the great dray-horses there are clusters of the little bells called *grelots*, which keep up a silvery chatter, a tinkling chime, adding much to the musical colour of the Parisian atmosphere. It is like a continuous ripple of laughter in perfect accord with the bright gaiety and movement of the streets. Then the drivers of the tramways sound a gong, or blow a whistle, the note of which varies with the different lines ; and the tramway conductors have a little brass horn which they sound as a signal for starting or stopping. There are tram-

cars which are provided with hooters, and the noise they make must, by law, be easily distinguishable from that of the fire-engine hooter. The public chair-mender also has a horn. The itinerant seller of goat's milk, wearing the Basque cap (the *béret*), and followed by his docile herd of she-goats, plays a diminutive bagpipe or else a rustic flute. The *marchand de plaisir* (*plaisir* is a thin cake made with flour and sugar) rattles a wooden clapper. The motor-car, which in the open country is allowed to blow a siren or a whistle, is restricted in Paris to the use of the horn. The rare four-in-hands which have survived the motor craze sound a horn when driving through the central streets of the city, but are forbidden by an old imperial restriction to play in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, and in the Bois itself.

Clearly, amidst this babel of mechanical sound, to which must be added the shriek of the locomotives on the Ceinture Railway and the hollow raw hoot of the steam-tugs on the Seine, the old street-cries of Paris have but little chance of making themselves heard, and this explains their increasing tendency to disappear. A few however, survive. The hawker of cherries still sanctifies the spring afternoons with his "La douce cerise . . . la douce!" (The sweet cherry

. . . the sweet !), on a long-drawn-out wail, psalmodic in its melancholy reminder that the end of all good things is at hand. A more vitalizing because a more peremptory cry is that of the mussel-man, with his harsh "Voilà la moule! Elle est bonne. Elle est fraîche. Achetez la moule!" (Behold the mussel! She is good. She is fresh. Buy the mussel!). In addition to blowing his horn, the chair-mender and the itinerant cobbler, for a reason which has never been explained, give vent to savage roars, lion-like in their ear-splitting reverberations, which in the quieter suburbs startle the entire street, and people the window-casements with terrified housemaids, "Voilà le cor-r-r-rdonnie-e-e-er-r-r!" as if the last trump were being sounded. On a gentler note are the cries of "Fresh lavender!" "Good asparagus!" "Chand d'habits!" (the old-clothes dealer), "Buy my roses!" "Il arrive, il arrive, le maquereau!" (Just arrived, just arrived, mackerel!); "Fromage à la crème . . . fromage!" (Cream cheese . . . cheese!). The window-mender is almost as strident as the cobbler, while the plumber, whether itinerant or not, has a peculiar whistle, which, like the college cries of America, is peculiar to his corporation, making his presence known to any

other plumber who may happen to be at work in the neighbourhood—a valuable resource for thirsty or lonely plumbers.

The charm of these old cries is that they are echoes of a Paris which in nearly every detail, whether of architecture or the customs and costumes of its inhabitants, has vanished or is vanishing. They call up the vision of a city without any of the modern noisy traffic, in the days when the Champs Élysées were covered with wild-flowers, and, in the absence of steam, electricity, and petrol, the hours moved more slowly. Then the sale of sweetmeats to small children was accompanied by the chanting of a plaintive tune which was as old as the fairies. To-day a ten-centime piece is placed in the slot of an automatic machine.

Quite as ancient a corporation as the street criers are the street musicians. It is only on the great national fête-days that they are allowed real freedom, and in the wealthier quarters their entrance to the courtyards of the houses is forbidden, though it is rare that the concierge, with the sentimentality of her class, does not allow this order to be infringed. Their music is rarely without a local or national note, and this, perhaps, is its most marked peculiarity. The Midi is represented by the classic



pan-pipes and the semi-Oriental heart-throbings of the French tambourine, which, unlike the Spanish tambourine, is an elongated drum. The Celtic centre of France, the Berri, sends us its *vielle*, or hurdy-gurdy, with the plumed bravuras, the amorous trills, and martial dancing notes, of its rustic keyboard. The very last of the Provençal troubadours, with that indefatigable baritone voice which, through all ages and all weathers, has remained true to the romantic ideal, is here with his guitar. Alsatia asserts her attachment to the mother-country on trombones and clarinets. Savoy is personified by a tuneful but betattered infant with a marmoset and an accordion. Except on special occasions when the street corners are taken possession of by the *chanteurs de complaintes* (a survival, peculiar to Paris, of the old political and topical ballad-mongers), who reel out interminable relations of national events or sensational crimes, to an ancient argumentative recitative which never varies, and is accompanied by an excitable fiddle, the vocal music in the streets and courtyards of Paris is blood-curdling in its mournful appeal to charity. Each singer has his day. In a certain house, near the Church of St. Vincent de Paul, one used to know that it was Tuesday afternoon by the arrival

of the man who had no tongue, and sang an awful caricature of the "Marseillaise" through a silver tube surgically inserted in his larynx. On Wednesday it was the turn of that drunken ruffian with the brow-beaten wife, who bawled out with sentimental tremolos, "Petits oiseaux, n'allez pas sur la plai-ai-ai-ne-e" (a warning to the little birds of the cruel traps that are set for them in the fields), while between each verse he addressed a kick, or some shocking oath, to his wretched companion: "Chante, donc, espèce de brute!" (Sing up, you brute!) For years it was on Friday afternoon that a very old man with long white hair and beard, and his foot in a sling, whined out on a note of immeasurable melancholy an ancient ditty with the refrain: "Buvons, buvons à la santé de nos cent ans!" (Let us drink, let us drink to the health of our hundredth year!). Then, one Friday afternoon, the courtyard knew him no more. His quavering voice was never again to draw to the windows the little *bonnes* with their wide, sympathetic stare and their willing sous. He had drained the last glass. Every winter freezes for all time one of these courtyard voices.



A BLIND WOMAN WITH A HURDY-GURDY



A TUNEFUL BUT BETATTERED INFANT WITH  
AN ACCORDION



## CHAPTER XIV

### A GREAT PARIS RESTAURANT

WHEN the two official blue bills appeared on the white walls of the Café Anglais, announcing that the place was shortly to be sold, it is not too much to say that the whole gastronomic world of Paris received a severe shock to the stomach.

What would the boulevard be without the Café Anglais? Already the pitiless hand of Time had been busy—especially of recent years—in effacing many, and indeed most, of its typical culinary landmarks. Tortoni's went two lustres ago, and with it the famous flight of three stone steps leading to its front door, up which had walked every illustrious Parisian from the Napoleonic days of Talleyrand and Wellington to these latter times of Clemenceau and Aurélien Scholl—a brilliant procession of diplomatists, politicians, conquerors, dandies, dreamers, and wits. Tortoni's is a fading memory. Then the Maison Dorée, just opposite the Café Anglais, after a patriotic struggle

against the democratic wave which is inundating the boulevard, heeled over and sank. Bignon's had already gone down, and with it the evocative name of the Café Foy. The Café Riche was not long in following the tragic example of the Maison Dorée. Brébant's, where Turgenieff, Daudet, Renan, and Prince Jérôme Napoléon, were wont to foregather, had been better dead, for it had dwindled to the level of a beer-saloon. The Café Julien had struck its flag to a dry-goods store. But none of these houses, essentially boulevardier as they were, could vie with the Café Anglais in Parisianism. Tortoni's, like the Café Napolitain, which is still with us, had an Italian inspiration which found material expression in a speciality of ice-creams. The Maison Dorée, the one serious rival of the Café Anglais, was its junior in years, and, though an acknowledged temple of French cooking according to the most sacred rites, lacked the serene dignity and the exclusive royal and imperial custom which give the Café Anglais its unique tone. And as for the others—well, all the others were, to use Verlaine's phrase, *littérature* ; that is to say, they exhibited objective forms, from which pure art, in this case the art of living, on the principle of living to eat and drink, was in some essential detail lacking.

\ It was felt that the disappearance of the Café Anglais would be the end of a world. For it is now more than a hundred years since the Café Anglais was founded. The story of its genesis is not without human and dramatic interest. Before the French Revolution broke out, the space behind the ramparts of the city (now the boulevard), lying between what are to-day the corners of the Rue de Richelieu, and the Rue de Grammont, was occupied by the country mansion and park of the Duc de Choiseul, the Foreign Minister of Louis XV. This was pulled down on the Duc's death, and in the grounds surrounding it the existing streets were then built. The boulevards, which had been planted with trees some years before, were just becoming fashionable as a promenade, and so a number of minor restaurants sprang up in their vicinity. Among these was the little wayside eating-house, or cabaret, at the corner of the Rue de Marivaux, which was to become world-famous as the Café Anglais.

\ The name of its original owner has been lost in the fog of ages. His establishment was modest in appearance, and possessed this inconvenience, that its floor was more than a yard lower than the level of the boulevard. Even now, on entering the Café Anglais, a step down-

ward must be taken. Its customers were few ; but one day a band of gilded youths invaded its precincts, and, finding the food good, and the wine even better, they consecrated it to their use. Chief among them was the very odd Monsieur de Sourdeval. As soon as the vogue of the little half-rustic cabaret was assured, Monsieur de Sourdeval made a point of dining there daily, after which he would invariably proceed, in any sort of weather, to the Jardin des Plantes, to look at the wild beasts, reciting Latin verses on the way, and every night he listened to the last act—never more than the last act—of an opera, placing himself full in view of the audience on the steps leading to the orchestra. This is all that is known of Monsieur de Sourdeval ; still, it sufficed to make him immortal, and he was the first of a long line of eccentric *viveurs* whose extravagancies helped to give fame to the Café Anglais. But it was not until the beginning of the last century, after the Peace of Amiens, when the English were free again to visit Paris, that the Café Anglais achieved its present designation. The English were then the only people in Europe who had money “to burn,” and they showed, regardless of expense, their appreciation of the excellent French cheer which was to be found at the little



boulevard house. They constituted, in fact, its mainstay, and thus it took its name from them. When war again broke out between the France of Napoleon and the England of George III., the *Café Anglais*, perforce abandoned by its best customers, was on the verge of ruin. It was saved by one dinner, a feast of such Gargantuan proportions and culinary ingenuity that all Paris rang with its fame, and then flocked to the restaurant where every previous kitchen record had been beaten. The menu led off with a "potage Camerani," so named after its inventor, an actor at the *Théâtre Feydeau*. The chief ingredient of this phenomenal soup was the concentrated essence of forty fat chicken livers, and its successful preparation depended on the chickens having been killed by electricity, according to a method invented by Beyer, the organizer of the dinner, an eminent scientist of the day, and, clearly, the discoverer of electrocution.

The fortunes of the *Café Anglais* were now on the uphill grade, and it became necessary to enlarge the premises. At No. 13 of the *Rue de Marivaux*, which forms an angle with No. 13 of the *Boulevard des Italiens*, there was a gambling den known as the "Grand Treize." This was absorbed by the *Café Anglais*, which thus bears

the double No. 13—of the Rue de Marivaux, and also of the Boulevard des Italiens—but does not seem to have been unlucky on this account.

| A year after Waterloo, a new proprietor, who was from Bordeaux, Monsieur Chevreuil, set himself to arrange the cellars on a scale which should be worthy of the growing reputation of the restaurant. His clarets and foreign wines were selected with immense care and skill, but, being from Bordeaux, he disliked burgundies, and disliked the customers who drank them, though willing to minister at extravagant prices to the taste that he condemned. The eccentricities of the habitués and the crankiness of its successive proprietors have ever distinguished the Café Anglais. Its cellars, which extend under three neighbouring houses, are kept as neatly as a lady's boudoir. The intersecting passages have a little railway running along them, and converge to a four-cross road, in the centre of which is an artificial orange-tree with luminous oranges. The cellar walls are decorated with festoons of grape-vines hiding electric lamps. Here are wines, in the strictest sense of the term, fit for Kings: Château Lafite of 1804 (of which the magnum is priced 120/-) and of 1805; Haut Brion of 1880 (120/-); Château Margaux 1848 (80/-); Clos d'Estournelles, 1834; Château



THE CAFÉ ANGLAIS, WITH ALPHONSE, THE HEAD-WAITER



Latour, 1871; old brandies of 1784, 1797, and 1809, and green Chartreuse of 1869 and 1877, all of which are priceless; port of 1820 and 1834.

\It was in the heyday of the Second Empire, about fifty years ago, that the Café Anglais reached the zenith of its prosperity. At that epoch supper meant more than dinner to the smart men and women about Paris. The Café Anglais was essentially a supper-place, to which resorted after the theatre the illustrious dandies of the time—the Duc de Gramont-Caderousse; the ill-fated young Prince of Orange, heir to the throne of Holland, and nicknamed “Citron”; the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales; the Duke of Hamilton, who was finally to break his neck on the staircase of the Maison Dorée opposite, his bosom friend, Lord Seymour, or “Milor’ Arsouille,” as he preferred to call himself; the late Prince de Sagan; Mr. Bryan, an eccentric American member of the Jockey Club, whose joyous practice it was to pour a bottle of curaçao into the piano, doubtless to give it tone. The “Grand 16,” the first-floor room overlooking the corner of the Rue de Marivaux and the boulevard, where the most notable suppers were served, no longer has a piano; and this is a sign of the changing times, sedate dinners having taken the place of noisy

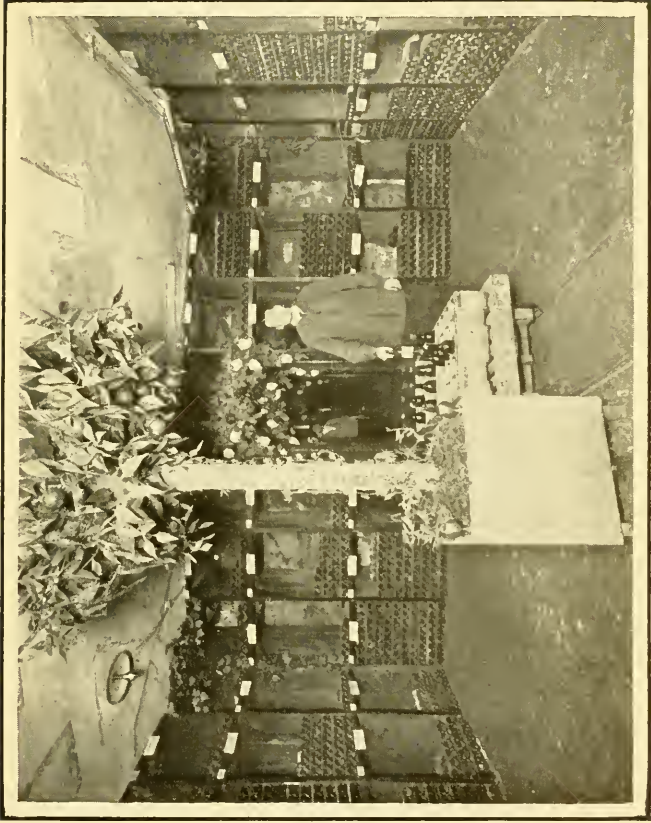
suppers. More than once Napoléon III. came incognito to the "Grand 16," where, in the Exhibition year, just before the Empire fell, was served the famous dinner "of the three Emperors," so called because the amphitryon was the then Tsar of Russia, and with him were the Tsarewitch, afterward Tsar Alexander III., and William, King of Prussia, afterward German Emperor. The "Grand 16" is, on account of the many imperial and royal personages who have dined within its red-damask-hung walls, of all the restaurant dining-rooms in the world, the one in which the souvenirs of monarchy are thickest. Once the "Grand 8" of the defunct Maison Dorée ran a close second to it; but the proprietors of the Maison Dorée made the mistake of purchasing a quantity of wines taken from the Tuileries, and sold at public auction after the imperial palace had been destroyed by the mob, and the sight of these famous *crus* on the wine-card may well have proved an eyesore to the illustrious personages who, in more peaceful times, had enjoyed the fallen Emperor's hospitality.

The "Grand 16" of the Café Anglais has retained its First Empire aspect on the original Louis Quinze setting, without a trace of modern garishness having been added. Yet, in spite

of its prim and demure outlook, what fantastic scenes has it not witnessed in those old supping days to which Balzac and the memorialists of two generations ago so constantly refer? It was here that Cora Pearl, the Salome of the effete Second Empire, was served up in the costume of Eve on a silver platter hidden beneath a dish-cover, at a supper given by the Duc de Gramont-Caderousse. It was from the "Grand 16" that Rigolbroche, the Polaire of her day, set out in similarly light attire on her famous trip across the boulevard to the Maison Dorée. Often enough the supper service was sent hurtling through the windows on to the boulevard below, by the frenzied young bloods of the period, of whom, perhaps, the maddest was the recently deceased General Marquis de Galliffet, in whose memory a dinner is now held at the Café Anglais every first and second Friday of the month. Prince Bismarck frequently supped there before the Franco-German War. The Café Anglais has helped to reconcile with the vicissitudes of life more than one deposed and exiled monarch. The ex-King Milan of Servia rarely dined elsewhere, and Queen Isabella of Spain, leaving her carriage a few doors farther down the boulevard, so as not to be seen, and accompanied by her suite, has many a time plied

an assiduous knife and fork in the "Grand 16." During the revolution which followed the collapse of the French army at Sedan, the Comtesse de Castiglione, the most beautiful woman of her time, not excepting the Empress Eugénie, who thought she had reasons to be jealous of her, was hidden in an apartment over the Café Anglais by the head-waiter. This saved her from the sanguinary fury of the Communist mob, who attributed the national disasters in part to her supposed influence over Louis Napoléon. The figure of the head-waiter Ernest, to whom the Comtesse de Castiglione was indebted for this chivalrous rescue, lingers in the memories of old-timers as the model of what a *maître d'hôtel* should be—clean-shaven, soft of speech, with the manners, but not the morals, of a diplomatist, for he should never say the thing that is not, a sincere but not obtrusive counsellor, a living and loving encyclopædia of gastronomic lore. Ernest's present successor, Alphonse, worthily maintains the traditions of these weighty functions. For the *maître d'hôtel* is the ambassador of the chef. At the Calé Anglais there has been an unbroken line of great cooks, of whom each in turn has inherited the mantle of the illustrious Carême. What Berlioz and Wagner were to music, and





THE CELLARS OF THE CAFÉ ANGLAIS, SHOWING THE FAMOUS ORANGE-TREE



Chateaubriand to the written word, Carême was to cooking, the first of the great Romantics. After being cook to Napoleon I., Carême entered the service of George IV. ; but his artistic spirit, cramped within the stony confines of Windsor Castle, quickly sought release from insular surroundings, and his description, in the preface of his monumental work on cooking, of the why and the how of his resignation from the service of the British Sovereign is a page of blazing eloquence, instinct with patriotic and artistic ardour, which, if the "First Gentleman in Europe" ever read it, must have made him feel cheap indeed. Carême found refuge in Paris, with Baron de Rothschild, and there formed his most famous pupil, the great Dugléré. Quitting Baron de Rothschild, Dugléré became chef at the Café Anglais, where he invented the potage Germiny, dedicated to the eminent financier, Comte de Germiny, the *barbue* (brill) à la Dugléré, the *pommes Anna*, the *poulet à la d'Albuféra*, dishes now celebrated throughout the world. A pupil of Dugléré is the present chef and proprietor of the Café Anglais, whose name I would willingly have written down here, had he not, with the modesty so becoming to the true artist, particularly begged me not to do so. "The name of the Café

Anglais," he said, "is quite glorious enough by itself."

The imperial and royal crowned heads of Europe have borne no grudge against the artistic descendants of Carême for the master's refusal to accompany Napoléon to St. Helena, and his rupture with George IV. On the contrary, they are among the most assiduous and faithful customers of the Café Anglais, where several of them—notably the Grand-Dukes of Russia—have their own dinner services of silver plate, bearing their crowned monograms. Other noble habitués have simply their private finger-bowls and *rinçe-bouche*, some of which are silver gilt, and one is pure gold. These are kept in a large cupboard with glass doors, which is called the *bibliothèque*. The service on the first set of shelves in the right-hand division of this *bibliothèque* was that used for the late King of England when, being on a brief visit to the French capital with Queen Alexandra, he dined at the Café Anglais for the last time. The old King was giving Queen Alexandra the treat of "doing" Paris with him as if they were a newly-married couple on their honeymoon. Grave politicians were convinced that the King's presence was motivated by some deep political scheme. But it was nothing of

the sort. The King, accompanied by his Queen, was visiting the scenes associated with his joyous youth and manhood, when, as Prince of Wales, he was the most popular of Parisians, and there they sat in the "Grand 16," with just a few intimate friends, almost like Darby and Joan—she, no doubt, with indulgent love in her thoughts, and he with the mist of fading memories in his eyes. This was the menu :

Potage chiffonade.

Truite de rivière frite, sauce madère.

Poularde braisée au gros sel.

Ragoût de truffes.

Baron de Pauillac rôti, pommes de terre nouvelles.

Purée d'épinards nouveaux.

Salade, pommes, chicorée.

Asperges, sauce hollandaise.

Poires à la Bourdaloue.

Desserts.

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Chablis moutonne.

Moët 1893 frappé.

Château Latour 1875.

Grande fine champagne 1800.

A dinner in every way suitable to British Sovereigns, simple and substantial.

One of the most treasured souvenirs in the possession of Monsieur Burdel (there goes the name!), the present owner of the Café Anglais, is the autograph letter which Queen Alexandra wrote to him in reply to his respectful letter of condolence on King Edward's death.

In three to four years from now the Café Anglais, so well known to all the wealthy Americans living in or passing through Paris, will be driven from its ancient abode to make room for a Belgian bank. Will it be closed for ever, or merely transferred to another and, if possible, equally congenial locality? That is the secret of Monsieur Burdel.



THE "BIBLIOTHÈQUE," WHERE RUSSIAN GRAND DUKES KEEP THEIR  
SILVER PLATE





## CHAPTER XV

### THE WILD-FLOWERS OF PARIS

THERE is a wild-flower in the heart of every Parisian, and to this is traceable his passionate love of wild-flowers, which is one of the nuances, or shades, of his character; for the everyday life of Paris is constantly oscillating between the extremes of tragedy and, comedy, and, of all flowers, it is the wild-flower that has emotional temperament and wide dramatic possibilities. Never, for instance, was there such a skirt-dance in the world as that which the ordinary poppy of the fields dances every minute of its life with the wanton breezes. Since the reign of Louis Treize the Parisian has been *frondeur*, or a potential rebel, refractory to any established form of government; and the wild-flower, too, lives its own brief life independently, pre-occupied with a question of form rather than ambitious to outdo, either as to colour or perfume, the artificially cultivated and richer garden plants. The wild-flower is a Bohemian

and a democrat, and so appeals to the Parisian's sense of liberty and fraternity. Moreover, the Parisian, like the wild-flower, loves the "out of doors"; and highly complex, if you analyze him, as is also the wild-flower, he is in an equal degree a true child of Nature.

In England, and more particularly in London, the folk are greatly fond of flowers; but their preference goes to the old-fashioned mixed border and pot plants, such as stocks and pansies, geraniums and calceolarias, which they cultivate in their narrow gardens or window-boxes, and feed and pamper up with affectionate solicitude and pride until each plant becomes as unwieldy and fleshy as an old-maid's pet poodle. Size and brilliance of colour are what the Londoners aim at, taking John Bull, no doubt, as their model. These smug and well-groomed flowers, which have all won prizes for good conduct, have the virtues, but also the limitations, of the English middle-class. Their floral hearts, no doubt, are in the right place, to judge from the good-tempered vigour with which they bloom, and the strong conscientious perfumes that they give forth. They are law-abiding but passionless. They brighten up, with a note not so much of increased gaiety as of heightened respectability, the buttonhole of

Charles and the bodice of Mary Ann when those two honest but unromantic lovers sally forth from the counting-house and the kitchen to keep the most innocent of company on solemn Sunday afternoons. They are not of the kind that Ophelia would have woven into her tragic wreath. These simple garden flowers enter into the Londoner's scheme of home, enhancing the beauty of home, its comfort, or its cosiness, cheering and perfuming the memory of home in the after-years. They are the floral offerings which he lays upon the domestic altar. Parisian sentimentality, however, is less bound up with the *chez soi*, the domestic domain. There is no French word for "home," (*foyer* does not exactly fit it), and many a Frenchman, and a typical Frenchman at that, would just as soon see onions as roses flourishing in his garden. When he talks of the home, he calls it *le home*, using the English word, and credits it with many strange oversea characteristics which are largely the outcome of his imagination. It is not unusual for French savants to make a special voyage to London solely to study the English institution of the "home." When the Frenchman speaks of *la belle France*, he means a country flowing with milk and honey, with every available acre of it under wheat. The

almost universal ambition of the Parisian belonging to the middle-class of small shop-keeper, inferior Government employé, and railway official, is to retire to some little cottage in the country, there to shed his Parisianism like a slough, and in blouse and sabots, muddy, unshaven, and unshorn, to become a peasant as were most likely, his fathers before him. Thus he returns to the land, reverts to the original stock. Wild-flowers remind him in Paris of the country life for which he yearns. They have this special message for him, which is not quite so intelligible to the Londoner, who is more purely city-bred. Hence a reason, among others, why the Parisian is so fond of wild-flowers. In no other capital in the world are there so many wild-flowers sold in the streets as in Paris, and this humble trade begins in January, and lasts practically all the year round.

It used to be said that what distinguished a London-bred child more than anything was that he had never seen a cowslip growing. Such a definition could not be applied to a Parisian child, for cowslips grow wild in the grass-plots of the Tuileries and Luxembourg Gardens. Cowslips and oxlips are among the first spring flowers which the hawkers, with their picturesque wicker hods, the shape of which has not changed

since the seventeenth century, sell in the streets of Paris. But the first great wild-flower harvest is that of the daffodils. If the winter has not been too prolonged or severe, from about the twentieth of March until the end of the first week in April, Paris is encircled by a great natural chaplet of daffodils. The wide forests of Sénart and Chantilly, which spread to the north-east and south-west of Paris respectively, each being about six miles in extent, are carpeted with millions and millions of daffodils as with a cloth of gold. Unlike the artificially cultivated daffodils which reach England, though not France, in such enormous numbers from Scilly, the wild Parisian daffodil has a most delicate scent, which suggests the very breath of spring in all its freshness and purity. It is impossible to conceive anything more ethereally beautiful than these vast nodding plains of gold under the still leafless trees—of gold lambent and cool, like that of late afternoon sunlight upon a green lawn. The flower itself is of the simplest and purest type, the central crown being of a deeper yellow than the petals at its base, which are nun-like in their virginal pallor. These are the true Lenten lilies in their cassocks of dark green, unsoiled by the sacrilegious hybridizer, who is proud when he has made one of their

luckless sisters turn her chalice into a cabbage, or has sprinkled her golden crown with an indelible stain of blood, and called her by a new and foolish name. These are the holy flowers which inspired old Herrick to say to them: "When we have pray'd together, we will go with you along." Of just this scene Wordsworth wrote:

"I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden daffodils,  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

\* \* \* \* \*

A poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company."

They will bring into the streets and humble dwelling-places of Paris their atmosphere of spotless feminine grace, of youthful melancholy and pure tenderness. No Parisian can see for the first time this golden paradise of daffodils, which is just twelve miles from his city gates, without breaking into raptures of enthusiasm; and then the wild longing for possession comes over him, and he will spend a delirious hour in picking an enormous bunch of the flowers, and wallow in an ocean of gold.

If about mid-Lent you mount the steep street which leads through the little village of Épinay-sous-Sénart, on all sides you will see daffodils withering and crushed on the path, which wanton children have plucked and thrown away. And you can find your way easily to the daffodil regions simply by following this track. Every cottage on the outskirts of the forest has huge bunches of daffodils in its windows. You will see boys and girls carrying long poles on their shoulders, upon which hang bundles of daffodils in rows. They are on their way to the Paris market. In the forest itself you will find peasants with barrows and carts heaped high with hundreds of bunches of daffodils, which have the same destination. Many pickers trudge twice from Sénart to Paris in the day with their loads of daffodils on their backs ; others spend the whole night in the forest, braving the early spring frosts, so as to be the first in the field. The Paris market can absorb only a small proportion of the incalculable quantity of daffodils which flower every year in this ancient forest of Sénart. (It was there that Louis Quinze first set eyes on the beautiful maiden, from the neighbouring village of Étioilles, who was afterwards to change her plebeian name of Poisson for that of Marquise de Pompadour.) In Paris

a fairly large bunch of these wild-daffodils is sold for seventy-five centimes, or sixpence, so that the value of the annual crop must run into many thousands of francs.

∩ In a few days this vast carpet of gold will change from dazzling yellow to a deep blue. The bluebells, or wild-hyacinths—*les clochettes*, as the Parisian calls them—have taken the place of the daffodils. All the woods round Paris are blue with them, and they have managed to survive in the wild state even in the less frequented thicknesses of the Bois de Boulogne. There are few parts of France where the bluebell grows in greater abundance than close to the capital, so that it might well be considered the Parisian wild-flower above all others. Children are fond of making wreaths of it, to which it lends itself easily, with its long flexible stalk. The vista of a woodland glade drowned in the blue shimmer of these flowers in myriads, from beneath one's feet to the vanishing-point of the perspective, is a sight not to be forgotten, and is common around Paris in the months of April and May; while in the city itself the long lines of barrows heaped with the wild blue hyacinths, and the hawkers' hods and baskets full of them, paint the streets with a ribbon of deep dreamy blue, especially in the neighbour-





A PARISIAN PICKING DAFFODILS IN THE FOREST  
OF SÉNART



SELLING DAFFODILS IN THE PARIS STREETS



hood of the railway-stations, in the open spaces round the churches, and at the entrances to the local markets, where the sellers of wild-flowers chiefly take their stand. The very air is faint with their powerful and exquisite perfume. But the bluebells are not the favourite wild-flowers of the ordinary Parisian. The palm of popularity must be given to the lily of the valley—the *muguet des bois*.

What the forget-me-not is to the German Gretchen, the *muguet des bois* (the wild lily of the valley) is to the Paris *grisette*, and thus it has been for untold generations. The first of May is known as the *Fête du Muguet*, and on that day, not only is it traditional for children to make presents of bunches of wild lilies of the valley to their elder brothers and sisters—the flower seems to be dedicated to youth—but in the streets surrounding the opera-house, where all the big dressmakers are, you will see at luncheon-hour troops of the young girl apprentices wearing bunches of *muguet* in their simple bodices. The *muguet* brings luck, and it appeals more than any other flower to the humble little Parisienne's sense of poetry, this delicate spike with its double row of little milk-white bells, its broad tapering leaf, and its peculiarly evocative scent. No doubt she feels

that in a sense it reflects herself. Is not her life just such another ringing of the changes on a chime of little silver bells, whose flash and tinkle last for the brief space of a spring season? She has the same native wildness, and simple unconscious elegance. To start forth on a bright Sunday morning for one of the woods near Paris, and pick *muguet*, is her ideal of a holiday excursion.

“ En cherchant du muguet,  
Du muguet dans la clairière ;  
En cherchant du muguet,  
Du muguet d-a-ans l-a-a f-ô-r-e-t !”

she sings, and on her way back she pets her lilies of the valley as if they were human beings : “ Oh, the beautiful *muguet*, how sweetly it smells !” Elaborate are her plans for disposing of it. One large bouquet will remain in her room for at least a week, reminding her every moment of the delightful day she has spent. A few sprays will be given to the concierge, or janitor, whose good graces are to be cultivated ; while the remainder will go to *grand, maman*, who will not fail to be tearfully reminded thereby of her own sylvan excursions in search of *muguet* in those far-off days when there were hardly any railways, and it was half a day’s journey to the woods at Meudon.

According to the herbalists, the petals of the lily of the valley contain a toxic substance, which, like digitalis, has a directly stimulating effect upon the heart. Perhaps this may account, by some subtle process of sentimental telepathy or suggestion, for the charm which the *muguet* so potently exercises over the heart of those essentially Parisian little beings, all made up of nerves, gaiety, and emotions, the *midinette* of the dress-making atelier, and the *grisette* of the Latin Quarter. The street-cry, "Fleurissez-vous, mesdames : voilà le muguet !" (Beflower yourselves, ladies : behold the lily of the valley !), followed by, "Du muguet ! Achetez du muguet ! Du bon muguet parfumé !" (Lilies of the valley ! Buy the lilies of the valley ! Fine scented lilies of the valley !), is one of the oldest in Paris. The *muguet* harvest is as much a godsend to the pariahs of the Paris pavement as is the hop-picking in Kent to the submerged tenth of the London East End. The May morning has hardly dawned before a procession of ragged, footsore tramps comes streaming into the city from the neighbouring woods, loaded with *muguet*. On May Day waggon-loads of *muguet* arrive by train. The flowers are picked when they are still in the earliest bud, for the little

Parisian lady likes to see them open out under her own eyes, and so have the illusion that their lives are linked with hers. In some of the great forests round Paris it is forbidden to pick the *muguet* on pain of a fine; for the pheasants are laying at this season, and to steal the eggs on the pretence of looking for lilies of the valley is a common trick with the villagers.

The primrose, so common in the woods round London, is rare in the immediate vicinity of Paris, and to find it in anything like such profusion as in England one must go into Normandy. The vast and ancient forests in the Department of the Eure, at Bizy, Louviers, and Dreux, are covered with primroses; and though the pale yellow variety is by far the most common, the purple and white, particularly the white, are by no means rare. White and purple oxlips, which do not, to my knowledge, grow near London, are common in the woods of St. Cloud, which is only a stone's-throw from the Paris fortifications. The allied cowslip, which the French call *coucou*, is the most widely distributed of all the spring wildings in the coppices and meadows of the Parisian district. The village lads and lasses make wreaths and balls and Easter eggs of its delicately yellow-tinted and exquisitely-scented flowers; a delicious

sweetmeat is also obtained by dipping its petals into molten sugar. Enormous quantities of these cowslips, or *coucous*, are sold in the Paris streets. Sweet-smelling violets, both blue and white, grow in profusion round Paris, and even in certain favoured spots within the city area, as at Auteuil, in the deep sward of the steeple-chase course, and in the old abandoned cemetery in the Bois. But the violets sold in the Paris streets are not all wild; it is only in the spring that they are culled from the surrounding country. An article of faith with the Parisian is that *la vraie violette de Paris* (the true Parisian violet) has a far finer perfume than that which comes from the South of France.

Pink and white wood-anemones are contemporaneous with the first oxlips, and as spring merges into summer the hawkers' baskets will be filled with celandines (*chélidoines*) and king-cups (*soucis d'eau*), from the neighbouring streams and marshes. Flaming bundles of yellow broom and large bunches of yellow buttercups make their appearance, with branches of red and white hawthorn, of wild apple and pear blossom, and of the wild though not native lilac, of which huge bunches may be gathered in the woods of Vaucresson, twelve miles to the west of Paris. The stone walls of

the medieval ruins, so numerous in the departments of the Seine, the Seine-et-Oise, and the Seine-et-Marne, are topped and tufted at this season with the wild wallflower, whinflower, *giroflée*, or *ravenelle*, according as you give it the English, the Scotch, or the two French names, armfuls of which the holiday excursionist will carry home with him. The robinia, or false acacia, is now in bloom on the highways and in the woods, spreading on the ground a mantle of its white petals, as of snow. The yellow laburnum, called *pluie d'or* (golden rain), lights up the coppices and hillsides. The fields are full of the white and yellow marguerite, or anthemis; ditches and rivulets are blue with forget-me-nots. Red poppies, and blue and purple and blue-grey corn-flowers mingle with the as yet unripe wheat. A few weeks later the large ponds at St. Cloud, Ville d'Avray, Meudon, and Boulogne-sur-Seine, will be glowing with water-lilies. Foxglove reaches Paris from the Norman dunes, wild-lavender from the South. The banks of the Seine, the Marne, and the Oise, supply the yellow-flag lily (the original *fleur-de-lis* of France), and later on the bulrush. The marshlands yield up their feathery and tufted reeds and tall grasses. The flowering willow is a familiar sight in the



Paris streets at the period of *Les Rameaux* (Palm Sunday), when branches of consecrated box are also sold outside all the churches. When summer is over, the hawkers fall back upon heather, which they sometimes dye blue, upon *chardons*, or wool-carder's teasels; ferns; and at last, when Christmas approaches, upon holly and mistletoe. The French forests teem with mistletoe, so much so that tons of it are exported to England, and farmers are required by law to remove this maleficent parasite from their orchards under pain of a fine. But barely has the last hawker, with great bunches of mistletoe suspended from either end of a pole, vanished from the streets, than the first baskets of snowdrops make their appearance.

## CHAPTER XVI

### VANISHING PARIS—1910

OLD PARIS is vanishing apace. Not a month, not a week, not a day, passes but some new demolition is undertaken of buildings, and whole blocks of buildings, whose early history is lost in the mist of time. Just now the house-breakers are busy upon an ancient mansion in the Boulevard d'Italie which for tragic dilapidation and solitary sorrowfulness has always seemed to me to have no rival in any capital of Europe. Untenanted *bourgeoisement*—that is to say, for residential purposes—for more than half a century, it stands, or rather totters—for at the moment of writing it is being battered to the ground—in the centre of a vast garden, the coarse grass and bushes of which grow thick about it like the unkempt beard upon a vagabond's chin. Only the pen of Poe could do justice to the atmosphere of concentrated sadness and despair which surrounds this Paris edition of "The House of Usher." Like

the pensive nun who "forgot herself to marble," it seems to have brooded itself into a kind of ethereal disembodiment ; for at a certain distance, notably from the aerial track of the Metropolitan Railway, whence it can be seen, it suggests a large blue-green cloud which has momentarily settled on this wasted plot of ground, and has shaped itself into vague architectural forms ; then, on coming nearer, it looks as if its walls might be built of century-old cobwebs, petrified in dust and dirt. A hard blow with a stick would, one would think, suffice to knock the whole fantastic edifice, which has both the cinder-like hue and apparent inconsistency of calcined paper, into thin air. The slatted shutters, always closed, the stone colonnades, the Doric pillars which frame the entrance-door, the tiled roof, the classical mouldings on the pediments, the great *porte-cochère* which, gaunt and hungry, in the rags of the multicoloured posters clinging to it, has the air of a desperate and sturdy beggar to whom it would be dangerous, after nightfall, to refuse an alms, are all of the same dark, dank, mouldy green-black, veiled in the blueish haze which rises from the neighbouring Bièvre, once a sparkling river, now a reeking drain. Upon the cadaverous background of the time-stained

walls the broken, sightless windows show a faint vitreous gleam.

Here, indeed, is a haunted house—haunted by mysterious memories, if not by materialized spirits. So complete is the picture of its grief, with such histrionic perfection does it wear its weeds of woe, that one barely needs or wants to know its real story, as if no facts could outdo the suggestiveness of the unspoken tragedy. But the facts are gruesome enough, for it was here, in the grounds of this old mansion, that the “Goatherdess of Ivry” was murdered some eighty years ago. Aimée Millot, known as the “Bergère d’Ivry” (Ivry is a suburb hard by), was a virtuous girl, of singular prettiness, who tended her mistress’s goats in the Champ de l’Alouette, or “Lark’s Field,” also called—and this was a more ancient designation—the Clos Payen, in the centre of which stands the old house. The Champ de l’Alouette was then, as Alfred Delvau tells us—and he speaks with authority, for his boyhood was spent close by—“so full of sun, of verdure, of scent, and of gaiety.” The Bièvre had not yet been converted into a sewer, and the gloomy streets and alleys which surround it now were—in part, at least—tree-shaded roads and country lanes. In the sentimental imagination of the Parisians of



A PARIS EDITION OF "THE HOUSE OF USHER"



THE GREAT PORTE-COCHÈRE HAS THE AIR OF  
A DESPERATE AND STURDY BEGGAR



those days (it was the period of Louis Philippe), the picturesque figure of the "Goatherdess of Ivry" struck the last genuine note of Watteau-esque rusticity within the city's limits. She must have been to them in a measure what the "Lass of Richmond Hill" was to the Londoners of three generations ago. All Paris went wild over her murder. A half-witted waiter, named Ulbach, was tried, condemned, and executed for the crime. He stabbed her, he said, "during a clap of thunder," because she had repelled his advances. But his confession is now believed by some to have been the mere babbling of a lunatic, which conveniently covered a much more scandalous story. Already at that time the old house was a lonely and sinister place, used for clandestine rendezvous, and the wretched girl had, it is believed, been enticed or dragged there by a band of ruffians under the direction of a personage of high and even princely rank, enamoured of her Watteauesque charms, but whose head, when his guilt was discovered, was considered by the police authorities of that time to be too august for the guillotine. Such, at any rate, is the legend still current in the neighbourhood, and at least it is worthy of Ingoldsby.

Here, then, is a suggestion of the mystery of

these old stones, a secret which has been their ban and their spell, and they are carrying it to the grave. Not a soul has slept in the house since the murder was committed. Auguste Rodin, the sculptor, has used the premises as a studio, but that was years ago. He did not live there. Now that the place is being pulled down he has purchased from the *démolisseur*, the amiable and erudite M. Ragu, to whom I am indebted for some of the foregoing details, the wood-carvings and mantelpiece from its dining-room, and they will henceforth help to adorn M. Rodin's palatial studio at Meudon, so that the memory of one of the weirdest among the many strange houses of Paris will not be entirely lost. A literary interest also attaches to this blue ruin. It was originally built in 1762 by Peyre Ainé, the Royal architect, as a country house for M. Le Prêtre de Neufbourg, one of Louis XV.'s "Intendants des Finances." This commercially-minded nobleman (there is nothing new under the sun) established all around it a huge *blanchisserie*, or laundry, for the washing and "getting-up" of new linen for the retail market. Later on the laundry was taken over by the Paris hospitals, and when it had ceased to serve their purpose its dilapidated and abandoned premises—long, one-storeyed outhouses—



were converted into tenements for the very poor. Victor Hugo, wandering on the banks of the Bièvre in search of local colour for *Les Misérables*, saw them, and appreciated their uniquely picturesque squalor. They became the *masure Gorbeau* which he has etched with so Rembrandtesque a needle, where lived the philanthropic felon Valjean, Marius, the Quixotic student, and Gavroche, the *gamin de Paris*—surely the truest and most human of all Victor Hugo's creations. The *masure Gorbeau* disappeared some years ago.

\ The old house has also an historic interest. It was here that Corvisart lived—Corvisart, surgeon to Napoleon the Great, who gives his name to the Rue Corvisart, which is close by, a brilliant adventurer of science, who had never passed an examination with credit, but was, none the less, one of the pioneers of modern surgery, the diplomatist and wit, who could presume with safety to reply, when Napoleon inquired of him at the New Year's levee, "And how many people do you expect to kill this year, *cher maître?*" "That was the very question which I was about to ask of Your Majesty."

\ Destruction threatens another ancient dwelling in Paris—No. 24, Rue Tournefort—the interest attaching to which is, however, purely

literary—*et comment!* as the French say. Indeed, if all the writers of fiction who owe their art to Balzac had been grateful enough to make pilgrimages to it the house would long ago have become a literary Mecca. For the governing principles upon which have been based the methods of the Realistic, the Naturalistic, and the Impressionist schools of novel-writing are indisputably derived from the *Comédie Humaine*, and never in that immortal series of tales were they more triumphantly proclaimed and vindicated than in the amazing picture which Balzac has painted in *Le Père Goriot* of the *Pension Vauquer*. In that description the genius of Balzac gave the full measure of its capacity for exteriorizing the souls of material things in their relations with the human souls around them. When he wrote the undying phrase which sums up the *pension*, and Madame Vauquer, its proprietress, “*Enfin toute sa personne explique la pension, comme la pension implique sa personne,*” (her whole person *explained* the boarding-house, just as the boarding-house *implied* her person), he was putting in a nutshell what was then, to all intents and purposes, a new theory of Art, the practice of which was destined to bring about a literary revolution, to sweep away the old

romance of sentiment and convention in favour of the modern novel of observation and analysis. At the same time he was propounding, as against the purely materialistic doctrines which afterwards led astray some of his professed disciples, notably Zola, the truth, nowadays more and more widely recognized by psychologists and biologists, of the spiritual unity of matter. Then, with a burst of that ironic eloquence in description which makes him, whatever the purists may say, a stylist of the very first rank, he continues: "The sallow plumpness of the little woman is the product of this life, as typhus is the consequence of the exhalations of a hospital. Her knitted woollen petticoat, which from underneath displays her upper skirt, made of an old gown, of which the cotton-wool stuffing escapes through the rents in the split material, sums up the salon, the dining-room, the little garden, introduces the kitchen, and foreshadows the boarders. When she is there the spectacle is complete. Aged about fifty years, Madame Vauquer resembles *all women who have had misfortunes.*" "*All is true,*" adds Balzac in English, for he must have felt (and he was right) that only the language of Shakespeare, to whose sublimest heights of tragedy he was about to climb, suited the splendour of this boast.

The spectacle, alas! is no longer complete, precisely for the reason that Madame Vauquer is necessarily absent from it, except in the spirit, to which Balzac gave firstly flesh and then immortality. In the natural order of things Madame Vauquer would long ago have been laid in her grave. Still, *all is true* in the main details, allowing for the superficial changes due to the lapse of time—the action of *Le Père Goriot* opens in 1819—all is true, save for the beings, imaginary, but of so intense a life, with whom Balzac peopled this house. It is no longer a *pension*. Its fortunes, already ebbing, when under the direction of Madame Vauquer its respectability was so zealously assured, have greatly declined during the intervening ninety years. Originally the suburban mansion of M. Boylève de Chambellan, in 1777—those were the days of its splendour—it had reached in its pension phase an advanced stage of the shabby-genteel, and now it is a workman's tenement. Naturally the *odeur de pension*, which Balzac described, has fled, and given place to even more nauseous smells. But the walls are still “daubed with that yellow colour which gives an ignoble character” (Balzac was speaking of the Paris of Louis XVIII.) “to almost all the houses of Paris.” Gone is

the great mantle of ivy upon the wall of the neighbouring house overlooking the garden, from which the fruit-trees and all but one vine have disappeared, their places being now taken by roses and flowering shrubs. But the alley of lime-trees, which Madame Vauquer, though *née* de Conflans, insisted on calling *tievilles*, in spite of the grammatical observations of her boarders, and where the escaped convict, Vautrin, walked with Eugène de Rastignac, and held that memorable conversation with him, is still there. A black cat scrambles about in it, which may well be a direct descendant of "Mistigris." And you may still see at the back of the house, to the left of the little garden, the shed for storing wood, with the rabbit-hutches and hen-coops. It was in one of the four rooms on the third floor, whose windows overlook the garden, that "le Père Goriot" died. The concierge of the house maintains — quite mistakenly, I think — that Balzac lived and worked in the two miserable little rooms of which one is lighted by the gable window seen in the photograph, "while as for 'Monsieur Goriot,' he lived," she says, "in the house next door." There is no evidence that Balzac ever inhabited No. 24, Rue Tournefort, known to him as the Rue Neuve-Sainte-

Geneviève, though it is possible that he may have done so. In any case the room with the gabled window has no place in Balzac's description of the Maison Vauquer. Soon this venerable landmark must disappear, for it is too much to hope that an enlightened Minister of Public Instruction will cause it to be included among French "Monuments Historiques," and so save it from destruction. Already a large painted notice has been affixed to its outer wall, announcing that it is for sale, "either in whole or in lots," and surely before many months are over it will have disappeared down the hungry maw of M. Ragu, or some equally enterprising *démolisseur*.

To be covered with modern constructions is also the fate that awaits at Auteuil, that extreme western suburb of Paris, the garden, "4,863 metres square," which surrounds a little shrine-like edifice of eighteenth-century style, visible from the contiguous street, the Rue de Rémusat, on whose fronton, in large deep letters of gold, still blazes this proud inscription: "Ici fût la maison de Molière." Whether or not this is the exact spot where Molière's house stood cannot now be demonstrated. The monument, though repaired in 1858, was erected at the beginning of the last century, at a time when

the memory of Molière was still comparatively fresh, so that the tradition is very probably true. In any case, the garden must have been the one wherein he walked, and meditated, and took his ease, in company very often of Racine, who had the opposite house to the left, where *Les Plaideurs* was written, of Boileau, who dwelt a stone's throw to the right, and of *le bon* La Fontaine, and it was across this garden to the river's edge that the three friends—Boileau, La Fontaine, and La Chapelle—ran on that memorable evening when, after a too-copious dinner, their heads inflamed with wine, they conceived the mad idea of flinging themselves into the Seine, and were only restrained from carrying out this suicidal project by Molière's witty manœuvring. In that village of ruined and expiring gardens—Auteuil—none has a more woebegone and melancholy aspect, and its funereal tones are intensified by the curtain of black-green cedar-trees which closes it in at the back. A mantle of tragic souvenir hangs over it. It was here, or rather in the mansion which formerly stood in its midst—pulled down some months ago—that the Princesse de Carignan, whose elder little boy was presumptive heir to the throne of Sardinia, was accidentally burnt to death (February 11, 1829). It had

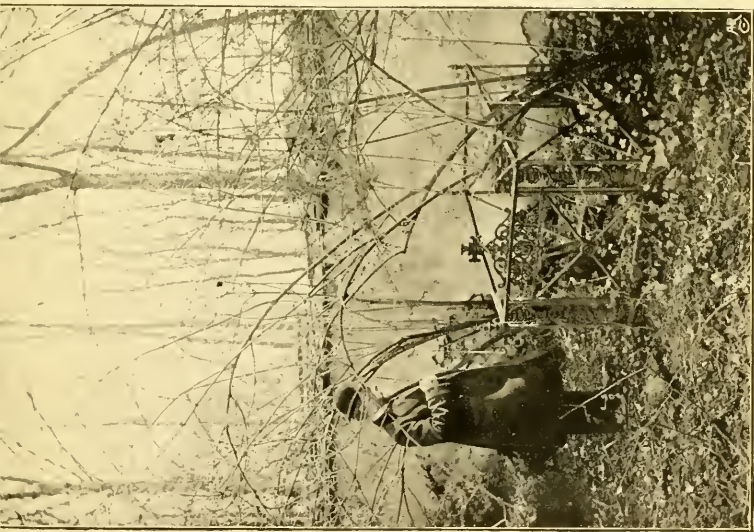
been lent to her by the descendants of the Duchesse de Choiseul-Praslin, whose own heart lies buried in the garden beside the body of a dearly-loved son. This Duchesse de Choiseul-Praslin was the grandmother of that Duc de Choiseul-Praslin, illustrious in the annals of crime, who in 1847 murdered his wife, the daughter of Marshal Sebastiani, in their town house in the Faubourg St. Honoré, and committed suicide in prison, or, according to another widely-believed story, escaped with the connivance of the Government to England, where he died many years afterwards. Thus Molière's garden is now a cemetery, though in ever so limited a sense of the word, for it contains the two ducal graves, of which, however, no trace is now to be found, and a cenotaph to the memory of Molière. Broken pots and pans, waste paper, discarded birch-brooms, a few still-budding rose-trees, masses of rubble, lie half-buried in the tangle of withered yellow weeds and sodden grass with which in this winter season its surface is covered. A ragged path leads across it to the Molière monument. The last tenants of the demolished house were Dominican sisters, gentle, charitable folk, whom foolish persecution has put to flight. Soon a great block of middle-class flats will rise in this



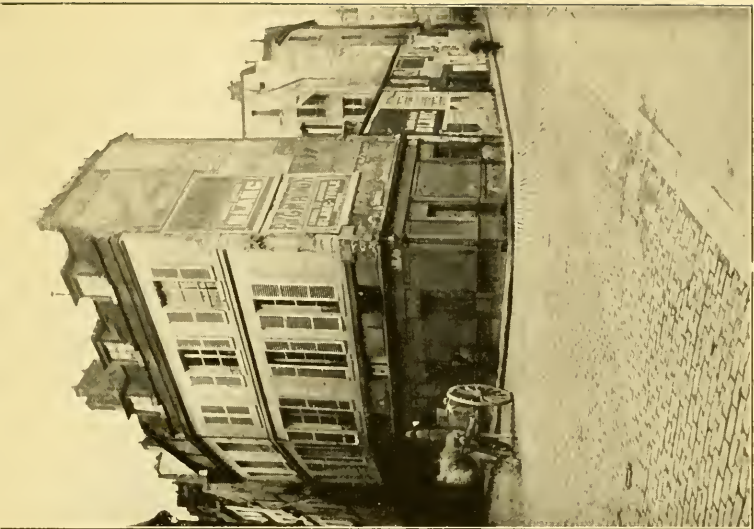
empty space. The cedars, centuries old, will be hewn down, and all traces of Molière's erstwhile presence will have disappeared.

\ Apropos of cemeteries, what foreigner, what Parisian even, has ever heard of, let alone visited, that old, old cemetery which nestles behind crumbling grey walls and tall sentinel trees in the very heart of the Bois de Boulogne? How few people there are who know of its existence! Yet there it is, and there it must remain, until its last *concession perpetuelle*, the duration of which is limited to one hundred years, has expired, and that will not be for another ten years. Then the skeletons will be removed, and the old cemetery will be absorbed into the Bois. I know fewer more picturesque or tranquil spots. In the summer it is a wilderness of luxuriantly growing shrubs and flowering plants, with lush grass rising knee-high, masking the broken and abandoned tombs when they are not entirely covered with thick-set brambles. In the spring the ground is sprinkled all over with myriads of sweet-smelling violets, both purple and white, and, later on, purple and white lilac, and roses of every imaginable hue and of forms run wild, perfume and embower it. This ancient cemetery, which originally formed part of the famous and, in the end, in-

famous Abbey of Longchamp (destroyed during the Revolution), has been closed for nearly twenty years. Till then the public was allowed free ingress to it, but this permission had to be withdrawn, owing to the indecorous conduct of a painter who had chosen the old cemetery as a suitable place in which to paint the nude *en plein air*. Students of de Goncourt will remember that it was here, one hot Sunday afternoon in summer, that the "Fille Eliza" murdered her soldier-lover as he lay dozing on one of the tombstones. Mlle. Guimard, the famous courtesan and dancer of the time of Louis Quinze, is actually buried here, and her tombstone, though it bears no inscription, has been identified to the satisfaction of at least one local antiquary. "La Guimard," who in the days of her splendour, when she numbered among her lovers the Prince de Soubise and a profligate Bishop, owned the house in the Rue d'Antin, which was indifferently known as the Temple of Dance and the Temple of Venus, died, extremely old, in 1818. The grave declared to be hers is up against the old cemetery wall, which is separated from the rest of the Bois by a grilled moat. On this wall, at its further extremity, sporting roughs are wont to climb to watch the races at Longchamps, for the ceme-



LA GUMARD'S GRAVE, SEPARATED FROM THE REST  
OF THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE BY A GRILLED MOAT



IT WAS HERE IN THE RUE DU FIGUIER THAT  
RABELAIS DIED



tery wall faces the Longchamp race-course, which is only a few yards off. In their excitement their hats not infrequently fall into the moat, and are then unrecoverable, and this zone of old hats, each more shapeless and shabby than the other, which encircles the old cemetery, but is only visible when the moat is approached, is not the least strange and fantastic feature of the abandoned, death-haunted enclosure.

Now let us go eastward, along the Seine, to the corner of the Rue du Figuier, and the Quai des Célestins. There in front of the magnificent, feudal, and still frowning Hôtel de Sens—once the residence of the Archbishops of Sens, to whom the Bishops of Paris were mere suffragans, and afterwards of Queen Margot, the enigmatical first wife of Henri Quatre—is a bunch of houses so ancient that no one can say exactly when they were built, but they are as medieval as anything to be seen in Paris. To the angle which their walls form with the Rue Fauconnier clings a broken Gothic niche which once contained the statue of a saint. Originally they must have been dependencies of the great Royal Hotel or Palace of St. Paul, built by Charles V., which extended from this spot to where formerly stood the Bastille. According

to a tradition, which is sufficiently creditable, *it was here that lived and died Rabelais*. The rambling construction, extending all along the edge of the gardens of the Hôtel St. Paul—gardens whose existence is recalled by the very names of the Rue du Figuier, and of the Rue des Jardins St. Paul, and the Rue Beautreillis just behind it—has now been divided up into squalid lodging-houses, the tenants of which are principally foreign Jews. It forms, in fact, the south-western boundary of the Ghetto of Paris. The late M. Charles Nodier, librarian of the neighbouring Arsenal, a learned archæologist and charming writer, was convinced that it was in this end bit of the Rue du Figuier—he specially singled out No. 8, but 8, 6, 4, and 2, all originally formed one building—that Rabelais passed his last years, and Charles Nodier, good Pantagruelist that he was, never passed the spot without raising his hat. A few days ago the crooked, bulging, venerable walls of this most ancient demise, which are daubed a dark red—a favourite colour in the Paris Ghetto—bore on them a notice printed upon paper of a slightly lighter red, announcing that the entire property, comprising the angle of the Rue du Figuier and the Rue Fauconnier, was to be sold at public auction, the upset price

being 130,000 francs. This announcement has since disappeared, the proprietor having arranged matters otherwise, but the existence of the old fourteenth-century building, which was almost certainly Rabelais' last home, is none the less doomed, for the Government has decided to expropriate the site at no distant date.

The expulsion of the religious orders is responsible for the vanishing of many a picturesque feature of Old Paris. Thus the Abbaye des Bois, which some months ago existed at the back of the "Bon Marché," and was famous from the fact that in the last century Madame Récamier, the most beautiful woman of her generation, held a literary salon there, the chief lions of which were Chateaubriand, Benjamin Constant, Ampère, and Lamartine, is now being covered with modern houses, the white-coiffed nuns who formerly owned it having been driven away. A few yards farther south, in the Rue de Sèvres, a vast yawning gap shows where, a little while ago, stood the Convent of the Hospitalières de St. Thomas, the only nunnery which remained open during the Terror, where was an extremely old black statue of the Virgin, which had been an object of veneration to no less a personage than St. Francis de Sales. One used to enter by a faded green door, always

ajar, on which was a seventeenth-century knocker of primitive, quaintly-charming shape, worn bright by the fingers of seekers after consolation for life's woes as the toe of St. Peter's statue at Rome by the kisses of the faithful, while above it was a little grated "judas," or spy-hole. The simple-hearted, charitable souls behind that door, who, inspired by the never-faltering spirituality of their black doll's smile, lived solely to do good, whom even the Revolution in its most epileptic phases had respected, have, nevertheless, been counted as a serious danger to the State, for which reason they have been obliged to flee to foreign lands, and their house has been razed to the ground. The same fate has befallen all the other monastic buildings in Paris, with very few exceptions, and if I mention one other—the Convent of the Dames de St. Michel (the "Ladies of Silence")—it is because their departure has left at the disposal of the builder of modern constructions one of the largest open spaces not a public park, which is still to be found in the heart of Paris. The vast gardens of this convent extended from the Rue d'Ulm to the Rue St. Jacques, in the Panthéon quarter, and covered over an acre of ground. The only vestige now remaining of its former inhabitants, if exception be made of the



hundreds of brown rats which play about in its shattered foundations, is a big pented shrine, hanging in ruins on the east wall, in the centre of which is the shadow—the ghost, as it were—of a cross, marking the place from which a huge crucifix has been torn. It was here that Ste. Jeanne de Chantal founded the Order of the Visitandines—nuns whose self-imposed mission was, as their name implies, to visit and succour the poor. Ste. Jeanne had a very illustrious granddaughter — Madame de Sévigné, the greatest letter-writer that ever lived — the woman who, indeed, created the art of letter-writing, which ever since her time has remained essentially a woman's art. And here she frequently came to seek solitude and to write her letters. It was in this convent that her supercilious daughter, Madame de Grignan, was educated. In the gorgeous mansion which Madame de Sévigné occupied at the corner of the Rue des Francs Bourgeois, which is now the Musée Carnavalet, she had neither the leisure nor the tranquil atmosphere that she needed for the composition of that exquisitely spontaneous, wittily descriptive correspondence which has immortalized her as one of the best and subtlest artificers of modern French. So she came here. Men have long ago adopted

the custom of placing marble tablets to commemorate the haunts of male genius. It is true that Madame de Sévigné has her tablet at the Carnavalet Museum, but surely the women should insist upon an inscription being placed near this spot in honour of that most brilliant of all women letter-writers. A large portion of the ancient gardens of the convent has already been utilized for the construction of the new "Institut Océanographique de Paris." The philanthropic Prince of Monaco, who has done so much for Monte Carlo in particular and for humanity at large, is arranging to substitute an aquarium for those old-fashioned flower-beds where formerly walked the "Ladies of Silence." The new building, which is in the most approved Monaco style, and looks like a provincial Casino—neo-Semitic is the right architectural designation—will soon be filled with all kinds of queer Mediterranean fish. *Autres mœurs, autres guitares!*

In the face of so much destruction, it is satisfactory to note that there is no truth in the report recently published in a Paris paper that the country-house, with its lovely surrounding park, at Aulnay, in the suburbs of Paris, where Chateaubriand wrote the first part of his "Mémoires d'Outre Tombe," is to be sold for building purposes. Its present proprietor, the

Duc de la Rochefoucauld, has no such intention, either for the present or the future. *De visu*, I have ascertained that the little old pseudo-Gothic villa, the genesis of which Chateaubriand has so amusingly described, is still intact, as is also the porch designed by him, of which he was so proud, with its two columns of black (now whity-blue) marble and two female caryatides of white marble, for, as he tells us, he "remembered that he had passed through Athens." The trees which he took such delight in planting with his own hands still flourish in the park, notably a magnificent pine which was sent to him from Canada, whose branches now form a superb nave, like that of a cathedral, before sweeping the lawn beneath. The little pavilion in which he wrote so many immortal pages is also intact. Englishmen and Americans owe so great a debt of gratitude to the prose poet, who by the best and most conscientious translation ever made by one great master of another's work, first made audible to French ears the sublime sonorities of Milton, and had previously demonstrated to an enraptured world the natural beauties of America, that it may be a satisfaction to them to know that the sylvan retreat, where were spent the few happy years of his tempestuous and sorrow-stricken life, is not to be desecrated.

## CHAPTER XII

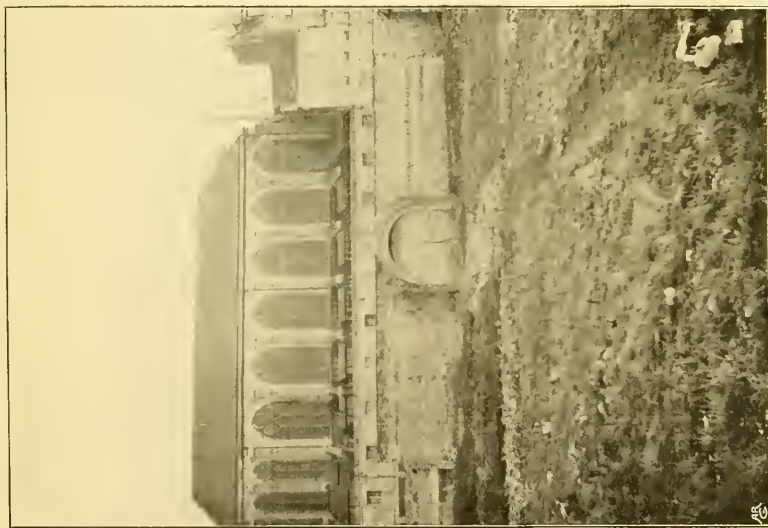
### A FRENCH SOLDIER'S MOTHER

EMILE DUVERNOY, a posthumous child, born six months after his father's death, is the only son of his mother, and all his youth has been spent alone with her in a tiny sixth-floor flat at Montmartre. His earliest recollection is of a yellow photograph surrounded by forget-me-nots, rudely snipped out of coloured paper, hanging in a black wooden frame on the wall of their one living-room. It represents a stern, hollow-cheeked man in a sergeant's uniform of loose, old-fashioned cut; in the hard, intense eyes a flame which has outlived the fading of all the rest of the picture; big pointed black moustaches; on the left breast eight medals and a cross. And, when Emile is old enough to understand, he learns from his mother that one of the medals is the "Médaille Militaire," awarded for fifteen years' faithful service in the army. And the cross is that of the Legion of Honour. "Yes," Emile's mother says, as she

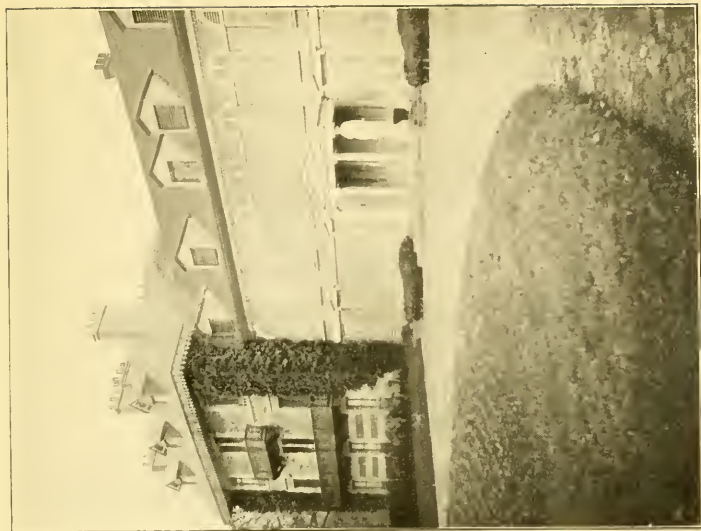
kisses him fondly on his little red cheeks, "thy papa"—for the photograph is that of Emile's father—"was a knight of the Legion of Honour, and thou must promise me to become one, too, is it not, my little man?" And the little man promises with wondering eyes.

The late Sergeant Duvernoy was the model French non-commissioned officer—twelve campaigns, eight wounds; saved the life of his Captain in one of the hottest engagements of the Tonkin Expedition, thus winning the Cross. Attached to the "Bats d'Afs" (Bataillons d'Afrique, 1<sup>re</sup> Section, Compagnies de Discipline), and thoroughly detested for his severity by the men under him (poor wretches! slaves in soldier's uniform), he never during the whole course of his life felt any remorse for the acts of cruelty which his devotion to duty made him commit; and when in retirement at Montmartre during the five years which preceded Emile's posthumous birth, his favourite theme of conversation, though he was not much of a talker, was the system of rigorous punishments employed in the "Bats d'Afs" for the maintenance of discipline. Thus his open-mouthed and not altogether admiring audience came to know about the *crapaudine*, which is a way of tying a refractory soldier by neck, wrist, and heels, so

that he is forced to lie helpless on his stomach until released, which may not be for two or three days at a time. "There lies my 'cherubin'" (cherub), the Sergeant used to say, "in the blazing sun, just out of reach of his water-can, and if by a superhuman effort he rolls himself up to it, and tries to lap from it like a dog, nine times out of ten over it goes! Oh, la, la, la! No more water till next day! And forty degrees in the shade!" They learned, too, that a silo is a deep hole in the sand, where the undisciplined soldier is buried alive for many hours, with only just a little aperture through which the light and air can reach him. They were informed that in the ateliers of the "Travaux Publiques," a section of the "Bats d'Afs," in which the soldiers are really convicts, the daily task of digging that each man has to accomplish, working in the sun from 6 a.m. to 9.30 a.m., and from 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., is a trench, 8 metres in length, 1.10 metres in breadth, and 80 centimetres in depth—just three times what the local contractors expect from the average nigger coolie. But the scene, the depicting of which gave Sergeant Duvernoy the keenest relish, was the pursuit of a deserter—the three sharp summonses to surrender, "then, ping-pang, and my cherubin to spring into the air, beat his arms



THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS



CHATEAUBRIAND'S HOUSE AT AULNAY





together, and fall dead on his face. And serve him right ! A deserter betrays both honour and fatherland, and does not deserve to live—a dog, an assassin, an—ugh—eh—what ? Yes, gentlemen, there you have what we call the ‘ Bats d’Afs,’ or ‘ Biribi ’—a hell upon earth, if you like, but the right place for an undisciplined soldier. Suppress ‘ Biribi,’ and you may as well suppress the army, and where will France be then ? ” A poser which left his hearers dreaming a little sullenly. As the Sergeant always referred to his former subordinates as “ cherubins,” this was the ironical nickname his Montmartre neighbours gave him—“ le Père Cherubin ” (Father Cherub). Little Emile, having been told by his mother that a “ cherubin ” is an angel, thinks that to call his father the “ Père Cherubin ” merely means that he has gone to heaven, and is secretly alarmed at the prospect of one day meeting him there, for in the photograph he looks so grim.

After the great Dreyfus *affaire*, a change came over the Sergeant. He became thinner, more and more hard-eyed, and spent every fine day sitting alone in the little square at the foot of Montmartre staring stupidly in front of him, smoking an interminable pipe. When asked what was the matter, he growled out that it

was his first wound that was giving him trouble. The doctor, called in at the last moment, diagnosed consumption. This did not deceive his wife. She alone knew that her husband had a heart—not the common workaday heart that is turned out by the gross—but a heart of his own, and not a bad heart, either—and it was broken. What he thought about the *affaire* no one ever knew—to have expressed an opinion when so many officers of high rank were at variance would have seemed to him an act of indiscipline—but the squalid horror of it all literally killed him. Just before the end came, he took in his wasted hand the Cross of the Legion of Honour which his wife had laid upon his pillow, close to his cheek, and, looking into her eyes with the hard stare which his illness had rendered more glaring than ever, he said: “Cherished one, if it be a son, I count upon thee that he never forget these words: ‘Honneur, Patrie.’” And he pointed to the motto encircling in gold letters the centre of the cross. She kept the tears from her eyes by an effort which left her dumb, kissed him, and he died.

Jeanne Duvernoy, though twenty years younger than her husband, loved him with devotion. Not altogether blind to some of his failings, still, she understood him, and knew at

least that she herself had nothing to fear from the primitively savage nature whose attachment to her was that of a wild beast to its mate. She has been his feminine counterpart, with this difference—that her ideals are poetized. Her patriotism is no less intense than was his, but it is of the lyrical order. Often she says she wishes she had been born a man, so that she might have been a soldier. It is likely enough that she would not have been deterred by the hardships of a soldier's life, for hard work from early morning till late at night is what Jeanne revels in. Her little flat is a model of orderliness ; her furniture and floors as highly polished as ever a soldier's buttons. A small, blue-eyed woman is Jeanne, with raven black hair reaching, when she lets it down, almost to her feet, and bright and active as a bird. It is not uncommon to find Frenchwomen in whom there is a strain of pure heroism—heroism of the romantic order—and she is one of these. Daughters of the Revolution, granddaughters of Joan of Arc, great-granddaughters of Eve, whatever may be their rank in life, they are charming as girls, faithful as wives, and incomparable as mothers. It is in poverty, sickness, and danger—indeed, in all the complex difficulties of life—that their best qualities come out. “ Messieurs les mal-

heurs, tirez les premiers," they seem to say, almost like the French Guard at Fontenoy. In the presence of a catastrophe their tempers remain high and brave; when they succumb, then, indeed, is the end of all things. And *débrouillardes* (managing and resourceful) that they are, too.

*Débrouillarde* Jeanne needs to be, for the expenses of the Sergeant's funeral sweep away most of his little savings—just £28. It is quite a ceremonious affair—a detachment of infantry commanded by a Lieutenant (this is due to his rank as a Knight of the Legion of Honour) follows in the procession, together with a delegation of the Veterans' Society, to which Duvernoy belonged, with banner, band, and bluster. The banner bears the words embroidered in gold, "Honneur, Patrie." In spite of her condition, the widow follows as chief mourner, and General X (the Sergeant's former Captain, whose life he saved), in civilian clothes, supports her respectfully on his arm as the coffin is lowered into the grave.

Then comes the dreary fortnight at the Maternité Hospital, with the misery of its prison-like walls and gratuitous nursing, through which Jeanne Duvernoy retains, if not cheerfulness, at least uncomplaining resignation. As

soon as she can get about, she trips round to the shops in the neighbourhood where she is accustomed to deal, and tells the shopkeepers' wives that she wants work as a *femme de ménage*.

The *femme de ménage* is an institution in many respects peculiar to France. To translate the term into English as "charwoman" would be an insult to a good *femme de ménage*, and not disparaging enough for a bad one. A first-class housekeeper, an excellent cook, to whom the purchase of the provisions may be entrusted with all security, an admirable needlewoman—such is the best type of *femme de ménage*, and she will do the work of a staff of servants for a charge of only 40 centimes (just under 4d.) per hour.

Jeanne's reputation is high in the "quarter," for she has always paid what she owed. Soon all her morning is disposed of. Before going to her work she takes little Emile to the Municipal Crèche, paying 5 centimes for him to be fed and cared for till she fetches him in the afternoon. Easily she can find enough *ménages* to occupy all her time, but she prefers to do embroidery at home, so that the presence of little Emile may brighten at least a portion of her day.

Jeanne's special talent is the embroidering of initials upon fine linen, and she is paid 25 cen-

times for each letter—a poor remuneration, considering how fine and elaborate is her workmanship. To earn 2 francs at this eye-straining task, she must toil far into the night ; but she sings a gay lullaby to little Emile over her needle :

“ Et maintenant sur mes genoux  
Brave général, endormez-vous ! ” . . .

—and to tend him and love him is an unfailing source of courage and happiness. Her husband's pension, after fifteen years' loyal service, and the award of the Médaille Militaire, was 1,100 francs per annum, or £44. His Cross of the Legion of Honour brought him in £10 a year, which ceased, however, at his death. Of the original pension, the widow receives just one-third, or £14 odd. Thanks to the influence of General X, she has been accorded a barrow-hawker's medal. To understand the meaning of this, the reader must know that in Paris the costermongers (*marchands de quatre saisons*), male and female, are a privileged corporation, or, to put it more accurately, they may not exercise their calling without a special licence from the Prefect of Police. Those to whom the licence has been granted—and for this they pay 5 francs (4s.) a year—are obliged to wear a brass medal, bearing the name and address of the holder, which is worn suspended round the neck

by a chain. Jeanne farms out her medal for 15 francs a month, in breach, it must be added, of the city regulations, but the police are good enough to wink at it, for her deputy is an old lady of unimpeachable virtue, who never obstructs the traffic, and always moves on when she is told to. Thus, on a monthly income of 120 francs, or 24s. a week, Jeanne, by prodigies of hard work and economy, manages to make two ends meet, and to maintain the same dignified appearance as in her late husband's lifetime, and this in Paris, where the cost of living is, even at Montmartre, at least one-third higher than in London. Her constant, if not her greatest, preoccupation is the rent. For two rooms and a very diminutive kitchen on the sixth floor of the Rue Baudelique she pays 120 francs (£4 16s.) a year.

In Paris rents under 500 francs are payable quarterly on the eighth day of the month before noon. On that day Jeanne must hand over 30 francs to the concierge, or house-porter, to be remitted to the landlord. It was the Sergeant's invariable habit to pay in gold—one 20-franc piece, and one 10-franc piece—this being more dignified than a pile of silver change, and Jeanne maintains the tradition. Never in the whole course of her housekeeping life has

she been a day or an hour late with the quarter's rent, paid in advance, and in gold.

The rent! How reverent is the attitude of the majority of Parisians towards the rent! Other accounts may be allowed to stand over, but a garment of peculiar sanctity drapes the rent. It is a certificate of respectability to be exact with the rent. In the worst criminal cases, such as wife-murder or parricide, if it can be proved in favour of the guilty party that he always paid his rent with punctuality, this is an extenuating circumstance, which never fails of its effect upon the jury, and may even secure his acquittal. The rent is constantly in Jeanne's thoughts. The sight of the big louis and the small louis gleaming golden, on the eve of rent-day, in the ragged old leather purse which had been her husband's, is a perfect joy to Jeanne, and her pleasure and pride are hardly less great when the concierge, on handing her the stamped receipt for the 30 francs, exclaims, as he never fails to do: "Ah, with Madame Duvernoy there is nothing to fear. Just like your poor husband—never behind by a minute. Ah, madame, if all the world were like you!" Regularly, on the eve of every eighth day of the quarter month, Jeanne jingles the two gold pieces before the delighted eyes of little Emile, eager to seize



them, and vexed that they should be the only bright things in his mother's possession, envied for playthings, which she will not let him have. "No," she says, "they are very beautiful, but they are not for little Emile. 'On n'y touche pas!' (Paws off!) *It's the rent!*"

\ Laboriously but peacefully the years glide by. Jeanne is happy, sitting with her embroidery on fine summer afternoons in the little Montmartre Square, gay with flowers, while three-year-old Emile plays beside her with the other small children of the quarter. She is happy when, a couple of years later, he parades Montmartre at Carnival time, to the admiration of all beholders, in a miniature soldier's uniform, all of which she has made for him herself, except the tin sword. She is happy when, a strong rosy boy of fourteen, he joins the Montmartre Gymnastic Society, and at the head of his company, in a graceful costume of white calico trimmed with blue, he rouses the echoes of the old Montmartre Butte with a bugle.

\ Emile has a nice voice, and sings Paul Dérouté's inspiring soldier's song, "Le Clairon" ("The Bugler") with great conviction and success :

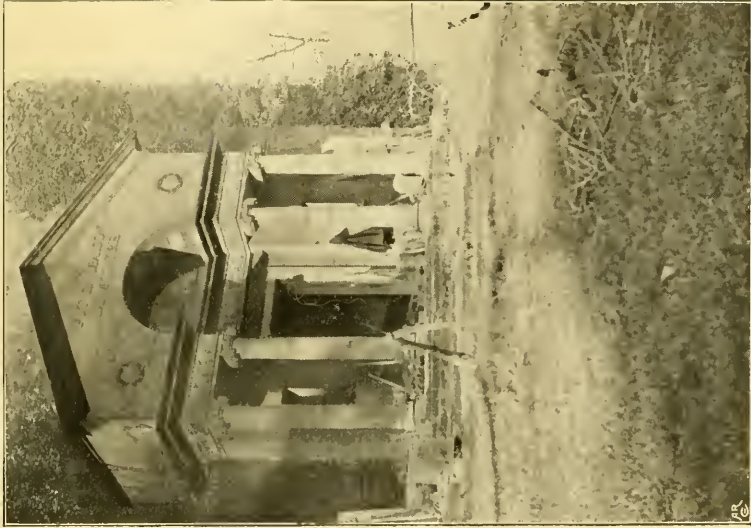
"L'air est pur, la route est large,  
Le clairon sonne à la charge." . . .

—and this, too, makes his mother happy, for she feels that he is his father's own boy. The thought softens her sorrow when she visits—as she does every Sunday—the Pantin Cemetery, to tend and put flowers upon the Sergeant's grave—a task which, throughout all the intervening years since her husband's death, she has never once missed.

Yet Jeanne sees clearly that Emile only slightly resembles his father. He is a thorough Parisian, while both his parents came from the provinces—the Sergeant from the lost province of Lorraine, and Jeanne from sunny Avignon. Emile has the vivacity, the restlessness, the hatred of restraint, the spendthrift tastes so common in the youthful Parisian of the present generation. He talks glibly, especially on politics, and has a highly acute, though one-sided, sense of injustice. He is self-willed, but not always along the line of duty. The Sergeant never admitted himself to be in the wrong, but he took some pains to be in the right. Like so many Parisian lads, Emile has several useless little gifts—draws cleverly, has a prodigious memory for popular songs, and takes a huge pleasure in anything that resembles, ever so distantly, a theatrical entertainment. Charlot, Emile's chosen companion in the



THE GARDEN AT AUTEUIL, WHEREIN MOLIÈRE  
WALKED AND MEDITATED



HERE STOOD MOLIÈRE'S HOUSE



Gymnastic Society, has the same tastes as himself, and evenings spent with him at the Gaieté Rochechouart, at the Elysée Montmartre, and the Cigale, not only drain the widow's resources of many a 2-franc piece, but involve the keeping of late hours and a disinclination to rise early in the morning on the part of Emile—failings, however, which his mother is certain the regiment will correct. For it has always been understood between Emile and his mother that as soon as he is eighteen years of age he is to enlist in the army on a five years' engagement.

It is then that Jeanne's dream is to enter upon the first stage of its realization. From private soldier to corporal, then through the successive grades of Sergeant, Sergeant-major, and Adjutant, she sees him rise. In democratic France this is quite possible. The non-commissioned officers' school at Saumur (Emile will choose the cavalry) comes next, and a couple of years afterwards he will don the officer's uniform. "Tu me reviendras un gentil petit officier" (Thou shalt come back to me a nice young officer), she whispers to him between mother's kisses. "Captain, Major, Knight of the Legion of Honour, Colonel, General, perhaps! Who knows what brilliant career fate

may not reserve for her darling Emile, who, with all the military fervour which his late father possessed, has had the excellent modern education supplied by the Paris Municipal Schools, writes such a good hand, and converses with so much apropos on so many topics?"

When the great day comes, Emile, taller and nearly twice as heavy as the late Sergeant, is drafted into a regiment of Cuirassiers.

How his mother's heart beats with pride when first she clasps him in her arms in his big blue trooper's coat and red breeches! How warlike he looks in the gleaming steel helmet with its great brass crest, from the back of which hangs the black *crinière*, or "horse-tail," destined to turn a sabre-cut dealt at the neck or the shoulders! The *crinière* is not really made of horse-hair, but of *fanons de baleine*, or shredded whale-bone. That is a detail which will be new to many people, but what Jeanne, although a soldier's widow, did not know before is that in the French Cuirassier and Dragoon regiments the *chic* or "swagger thing" for troopers who can afford it is to wear a *crinière* made of woman's tresses. It is really a very pretty idea. There is something in the notion which is very chivalrous and very French. But

the cheapest *crinière de femme* costs 200 francs (£8), and that, too, at second-hand. The very fine glossy and quite black hair which adorns some of the officers' helmets is of Chinese origin, and may cost as much as 1,500 francs (£60). As Jeanne listens to these details related by Emile, there flashes across her brain an idea which is at once maternally and patriotically sublime. Her own raven-black hair, in which there is barely one thread of silver, so glossy and bountiful that it is the pride of the quarter—"les beaux cheveux de Madame Duvernoy" is a phrase often on the lips of the concierge, and the baker's wife at the corner of the street—shall be offered up (as it were) on the altar of Emile's military glory to make a *crinière* for his helmet. And in this divine sacrifice, at the thought of which she at no moment feels one pang of regret or the smallest revulsion of female vanity, she achieves some part at least of the unattainable ambition of her girlhood—to be, not only a soldier's wife and a soldier's mother, but something of a soldier, too. Something of her, of *herself*, will accompany Emile throughout his soldiering. Her hair will float around his head when he charges with his squadron; her hair will caress his cheek in the hour of battle, if ever there shall be war; her hair will turn the

blows which the enemy may aim at his neck and back ; her hair may save a French soldier's life, and her son's as well. *Vive la France !*

When Emile receives from the *vaguemestre* of his regiment the registered postal package which contains his mother's hair, he knows well enough what is inside the box, for he has guessed his mother's intention from certain vague expressions in her letters, though she, fearing that he might protest against her sweet sacrifice, and wishing her gift to come as a surprise, believes that she has kept him completely in the dark. His comrades crowd round him. " Ah, the lucky youth ! Ah, the gay boy ! Ah, the pig—the fat, the immeasurably fat pig ! It is his sweetheart who has sent him her head of hair ! Ha, ha, ha ! He must pay us a bottle of wine !" And they pat him on the back and dig him in the ribs as he fixes the splendid black tresses in his helmet. " It is his sweetheart !" they yell in chorus. " Sacred pig ! Sacred Emile ! Thy sweetheart, eh ? Is it not—is it not ? Useless to deny it, you ruffian !" Emile does not say that it is his sweetheart, but *he is just too much of a Parisian to deny it altogether*. So he answers neither " yea " nor " nay," but jocularly asks his friends to admire him, and they admire him



on every note of the scale and from every point of view.

A year afterwards Emile gets into serious trouble, but through no fault of his own. He is an *élève brigadier* (or lance-corporal), and a comrade, also an *élève brigadier*, steals a document from the office of the regiment, where both are employed as clerks, and is caught red-handed. The thief, a silly youth whose brain has been addled by reading the endless adventures of "Nick Carter," and similar American trash, sold in illustrated penny numbers, not only denounces himself as a spy in the pay of a foreign Government, but accuses Emile of being his accomplice. The stolen document is of no value, the whole story is the invention of a hysterical idiot, and Emile's innocence is, after an elaborate inquiry, made clear. But he has spent three weeks in prison, and when he is sent back, without apology or compensation, to his regiment, he finds that he is, as French soldiers say, *consigné*—there is a black mark against him, his superiors look upon him with suspicion. The fact is that the prosecutor, the military *juge instructeur*, who had the case in hand, was convinced from the beginning that Emile, together perhaps with his mother, was the chief mover in a vast system of espionage, with ramifications

all over the world, and its centre in Berlin, and, having hoped to make the great hit of his life by unravelling this black conspiracy, he is disappointed with the result, and therefore deeply displeased with Emile. Emile may change into another regiment, but the ban, the *consigne*, will follow him wherever he goes.

The Colonel is in a bad temper when Emile, duly introduced by his Sergeant, respectfully asks for a month's leave to visit his mother, in order to console her for his long silence and to re-establish his health, broken by confinement. Gazing in wrath at Emile's rosy cheeks, the Colonel roars : " Ill, you say ! Clear out ! You have already been absent from your duties too long, and if I hear any more nonsense from you, you shall be punished severely." The consequence is that Emile has a bad attack of what in French military slang is called *le cafard*. A *cafard* is a black-beetle, and why the word should be employed to designate an odd mental, or, more strictly speaking, moral, malady peculiar to soldiers has never been clearly explained. The symptoms of the *cafard* combine the after-effects of too much to drink, with a touch of ambulatory mania, or mad longing to bolt. That night Emile, who has a *permission de minuit* (leave till midnight), does not return to



THE VIEW FROM NOTRE DAME ALONG THE SEINE, WITH ITS  
SPARKLING BRIDGES

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the barracks. Six days he spends in riotous living in Paris with his old chum Charlot ; on the seventh (for such is the rule in the French Army) he is notified to the police authorities as a deserter. He no longer dares to seek out his mother in the little flat at Montmartre, for that is the place where, before all others, the police will be on the look-out for him.

“ But to-morrow,” says Emile to himself, “ is Sunday, and mother will be at the cemetery. It will be quite safe to meet her there.” So he sends a message to her by Charlot, who has instructions to tell her just as much as may be wise. “ Bear in mind,” he says, “ she is a bit excitable.” Charlot’s preamble is in the nature of circumlocution, but he ends by telling Jeanne all he knows, and a little more. “ He’s a good fellow all the same,” says Charlot, when he sees in the blazing eyes and white face of the mother the terrible effect of his story. “ Of course, it’s no joke what he’s done. Sacred Emile ! A very bad joke, anyway. He did not know when he was well off. Sacred Emile !”

At the cemetery Madame Duvernoy is dressed in the deep mourning she always wears when she visits the Sergeant’s grave. Her face is buried in her hands. At first she does little but weep and shake her head.

“Tell me everything,” the mother insists, as if she did not already know all.

“They treated me with injustice, mother,” says Emile, “and I cannot stand that!”

“There is much injustice in the world,” sobs his mother. “The world isn’t perfect.”

“It’s no good going back now to the regiment; it would be folly,” says Emile.

The mother nods her head violently in contradiction. “Thou must—thou must go back, whatever happens! It’s thy duty, my little Emile. Thy honour bids thee. Thou must submit to thy punishment like a brave lad.”

Emile (after a pause): “Mother, I am leaving for Brussels to-night. There’s the ticket to be bought. Canst thou give me some money—just a little? With ten francs——”

The mother: “Help thee to run away? Thou knowest not what thou askest, my poor Emile. Then I should be as bad as thou art. The innocent dead one, who is lying here, would rise from the grave to strangle us both if he could know that I had helped thee to desert from the army, to betray thy country, to break thy word of honour. Oh, *mon Dieu, mon Dieu*, the honour that he held so dear!”

“Mother,” insists the lad in a hoarse whisper, “if I go back it is the *conseil de guerre* (court-

martial) that will judge me. *I have been absent six whole days.* Do you hear? Six whole days! I am a deserter, and they will have no pity. It is because they have acted unjustly towards me that they will have no pity, for never will they admit themselves to have been in the wrong. There is a black mark against me. I am *consigné*, and so it's *biribi* for me."

*Biribi!* The word strikes straight to the mother's heart. Père Cherubin's widow feels an icy thrill through all her veins. "Yes, mother," repeats Emile, seeing the advantage he has gained—" *biribi!*"

Jeanne withdraws her hand from her face, which is swollen and reddened with tears. In a second her mind has been made up. Her hand creeps to her pocket, from which she takes out the old purse that Emile knows so well, and thrusts it into his hand. Two gold pieces are inside it—a *twenty-franc* and a *ten-franc piece*. She has brought them with her.

It dawns on the lad that the quarter-day is approaching. Those two sacred *louis d'or!* "Mother," cries Emile in a choked voice, and stooping (for she has sunk to a sitting posture on the grave), he tries to fold her in his arms, to kiss her, "this is too much! Mother, forgive me. I will go back if thou wilt."

“ Va-t'en ! Va-t'en ! ” she cries in agony, and pushes him from her. “ Be off ! be off ! ”

“ Mother, let me kiss you—perhaps it is for the last time ! ”

As Emile bends down, the *crinière* of his helmet—*her* hair—has swept his mother's tear-riven cheek. “ Thou art killing me—thou art killing me ! ” she gasps. “ Oh, my son, my son ! ”

Violently, with a revulsion of horror, she frees herself from his embrace. “ Va-t'en ! Va-t'en ! ” He looks wildly about him, then slinks away. And prone upon Sergeant Duvernoy's grave lies the poor widow, a pitiful figure, with her hair cut short like a boy's, weeping out her heart.



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